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Annual Financial and Performance Report For 2000/2001

Ministry of Health Services

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 7

2. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 8

2.1. EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2000/01 9
2.2. REVENUE 2000/01 11

3. PERFORMANCE MEASURES 12

3.1. VOLUMES 13
3.2. UNIT COSTS 14
3.3. SERVICE STANDARDS - DAYS TO COMPLETE 14
3.4. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION 15

4. REGISTRY OPERATIONS 16

4.1. BIRTH REGISTRY 16
4.1.1. Streamline the Receipt of Birth Notices from Hospitals Physicians and Midwives 16
4.1.2. Obtaining Registrations of Births from Birth Parents Electronically 17
4.1.3. Physician/Coroner and Funeral Home - Stillbirth Registrations 17
4.1.4. Birth Registration Handling in Vital Statistics Offices 18
4.2. DEATH REGISTRY (MORTALITY) 19
4.2.1. Funeral Homes 19
4.2.2. Coroner 19
4.2.3. Physician 20
4.2.4. Vital Statistics Offices 21
4.3. MARRIAGE REGISTRY 21
4.3.1. Religious Representatives 21
4.3.2. Marriage Commissioners 22
4.3.3. Marriage Licence Issuers 22
4.3.4. Marriage Certificates 23
4.4. CHANGE OF NAME REGISTRY 23
4.4.1. Change of Name Processing 23
4.4.2. Archiving Supporting Documents 24
4.4.3. Reports to External Registries 25
4.4.4. Gazetteer of Change of Name 25
4.5. WILLS NOTICE REGISTRY 25
4.5.1. Registration of Wills Notices 25
4.5.2. Wills Notice Searches 26
4.5.3. Vital Statistics Agency 26

5. SUPPORT SERVICES STRATEGY 28

5.1. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT 28
5.1.1. Performance Measurement 28
5.1.2. Financial and Performance Reporting 28
5.2. HISTORICAL VITAL EVENT RECORDS 29
5.2.1. Release of Historical Vital Event Records 29
5.2.2. Restoration of Historical Indices 30
5.2.3. Historical Birth and Death Project 31
5.2.4. Data Quality Initiatives 31
5.3. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION 32
5.3.1. Transfer Payroll Function from Ministry of Health 32
5.3.2. Policy and Procedure Documentation 33
5.3.3. E-Commerce 33

5.4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES 34
5.4.1. Human Resources/ Confidential Services 34
5.4.2. Consolidation of Adoption Indices 35

6. REGIONAL SERVICES STRATEGY 36

6.1. SERVICE DELIVERY AND EFFICIENCY 36
6.1.1. Community Service Levels 36
6.1.2. Alternative Service Delivery Sources 37
6.1.3. VitalChek 39
6.2. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT 40
6.2.1. Millennium Certificates 40
6.2.2. Commemorative Marriage Certificates 40
6.2.3. Marriage Commissioner's Marriage Ceremony Memento 41
6.2.4. Partnership Registry 41
6.2.5. Plastic (credit card type) Birth Certificates 42
6.2.6. Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Telephone System 42
6.2.7. Central Clearinghouse Function 43
6.2.8. Validation of birth certificates 43
6.2.9. Marriage Commissioner Selection and Training 44
6.3. POLICY AND PROCEDURES 44
6.3.1. Legislative Review 44
6.3.2. Guidebooks 45
6.4. AUDIT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE 46
6.4.1. Surveys/Customer Satisfaction 46
6.4.2. Data Standards and Quality/Edit Checks 47
6.4.3. Performance Measurements 47
6.4.4. Enforcement/Offence Provisions 48

7. INFORMATION AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 49

7.1. DATA WAREHOUSE PROJECT 49
7.2. MEDICAL CODING 50
7.3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION 50
7.4. DESKTOP AND INTERNET SERVICES 51

8. LABOUR RELATIONS STRATEGY 53

9. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 54

10. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY 55

10.1. VISION ENHANCEMENTS 55
10.1.1. Loading Historical Data 55
10.1.2. VISION Marketing 55
10.1.3. VISION Upgrade 55
10.1.4. Financial Audit and Reporting 56
10.1.5. Character Set Enhancement 56
10.1.6. Asset Inventory 56
10.2. NATIONAL VITAL EVENTS DATA CAPTURE AND ROUTING SYSTEM 57
10.3. EXPANSION OF ACCESS TO VISION 57
10.4. DATA WAREHOUSE 58
10.5. RELEASE OF HISTORICAL VITAL EVENT RECORDS 58
10.6. INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF DISEASES – VERSION 10 (ICD-10) 59

11. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 60

12. HEALTH STATUS REGISTRY 61

12.1. MULTI-USER INTERFACE 61
12.2. ICD-10 CODING 61
12.3. NEW DATA SOURCES 61
12.4. DATA ANALYSES 62

13. VITAL STATISTICS COUNCIL FOR CANADA 63

13.1. DESCRIPTION 63
13.1.1. Key Business Functions 63
13.2. MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION 63

APPENDIX A: EXPENDITURE DETAIL 2000/01 65

APPENDIX B: BRITISH COLUMBIA VITAL STATISTICS AGENCY FISCAL 2000/01 BUSINESS PLAN TO RESTATED ESTIMATES RECONCILIATION 68

APPENDIX C: STATUS REPORT ON FLEXIBILITY POLICIES 69

C.1 APPROPRIATION CONTROLS 69
C.1.1 Expenditure Carryovers 69
C.1.2 Multi-year Budgeting 69
C.1.3 Spending of Recoveries Above Estimates 69
C.1.4 Exemption from Expenditure Restraint Exercises 70
C.2 ACCOMMODATION 70
C.2.1 Authority to Implement Accommodation and Major Project Plans Approved in the Business Plan 70
C.2.2 Authority to Contract With B.C.B.C. or a Private Company 70
C.3 ADVERTISING AND PUBLICATIONS 70
C.3.1 Communications Plan 70
C.3.2 Control of Communications Activities 70
C.4 AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS 70
C.5 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES 71
C.6 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY 71
C.6.1 Systems Expenditures 71
C.6.2 Development of Cost Effective Systems Solutions 71
C.7 MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, LAND, BUILDINGS AND WORKS 71
C.8 SERVICE CONTRACTS/CONTRACT MANAGEMENT 71
C.9 STAFFING LIMITS 71
C.10 VEHICLE MANAGEMENT 72
C.11 PAYMENTS BASED ON CONTRIBUTIONS 72
C.12 PURCHASE OF MATERIAL 72
C.13 SALES OF SURPLUS ASSETS 72
C.14 MICROGRAPHIC SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT 72
C.15 BC MAIL PLUS 72
C.16 PHOTOCOPYING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES 72
C.16.1 Government Records and Recorded Information Management 73
C.17 TRAVEL 73
C.17.1 Accommodation Policies 73
C.17.2 Out of Province Travel 73
C.17.3 Payment of Travel Claims 73
C.17.4 Contracted Travel Services 73
C.18 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY 73
C.18.1 Staffing and Classification Issues 73
C.18.2 Employee Incentives and Rewards 73
C.18.3 FTE Freeze Exemption 74

1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

I respectfully submit the fifth annual report on the operations of the British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, established April 1, 1996.

This document reports on the Agency's performance in its fifth year of operation, as a Special Operating Agency (SOA), regarding financial and performance measurement information. The status on implementation of the flexibility policies established in the framework agreement is also included as an appendix.

The Agency's primary objectives are to meet its financial and measurable performance targets. I am pleased to announce the Agency's net operating expenditures were $121,428 under budget and overall, the Agency produced a net surplus of revenue over expenditure of $2,299,149 representing a return to government of $30,112 above target. Unit costs were reduced below target levels (a result of reduced spending), service turnaround times were reduced significantly more than originally targeted and customer satisfaction increases met or exceeded projected levels.

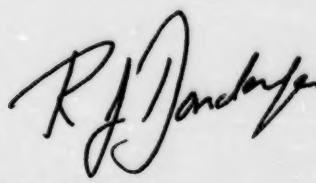
I would like to highlight some of the accomplishments reported in this document:

- The Year 2000 Annual Report of the Agency includes data analyzed by the newly implemented Tenth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD10). It is believed that this publication is one of the first to be released that provides detailed time series analyses bridging the Ninth and Tenth Revision.

- The first phase of the Vital Information Statistics (VISTA) Data Warehouse Project is complete. The data architecture and technical architecture for the capture and maintenance of high quality data extracted from the Agency databases has been put in place.

In looking to the future, the Agency will continue to work on its Data Warehouse Project. The next Phase of that project will see the development of desktop tools that will put the data more readily in the hands of health researchers and planners.

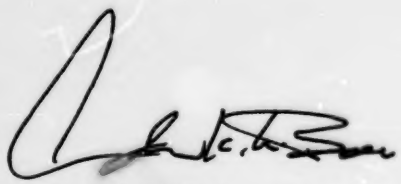
In summary, I would like to acknowledge that the success of the Agency is a direct result of the people who work within, and in support of the organization. The employees of the Vital Statistics Agency and its service providers continue to meet the challenge of making this organization a success as a Special Operating Agency.



R. J. Danderfer
Chief Executive Officer and Director
British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency

2. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The statements of Revenue and Summary of Expenditures on the following pages represent the financial results of the Agency for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001. These statements are not audited. Balances presented have been reconciled with balances presented in the Ministry of Finance, Central Accounting System period 15 Financial Reports for the 2000/2001 fiscal year as certified for the Public Accounts, for the Province of British Columbia for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001. Detailed expenditure information for fiscal 2000/2001 consistent with details provided in previous reports is located in Appendix A of this Report. The budget for fiscal 2000/2001 as presented in the Agency Business Plan is reconciled to the budget as per the Provincial Estimates and Provincial Public Accounts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001, in Appendix B of this report.



Andrew K. McBride
Senior Financial Officer
British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency

2.1. EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2000/01

Actual net operating expenditures for the 2000/2001 fiscal year were $121,428 under budget. This resulted in a net surplus of $2,299,149, a return to government of $30,112 above target.

The difference in the budgetary allocation between the Provincial Government Estimates ($6,992,000) as reported here and the budget forecast in the Agency Business plan ($7,132,521) is reconciled in appendix B.

The deficit of $72,425 in Salaries and Benefits is the result of a number of position reclassifications not anticipated in the 1998 planning process. Budgetary allocations to address these issues are planned for fiscal 2002.

Information systems expenditures on the National Routing System and higher than budgeted systems maintenance costs as well as substantial building improvements at the Victoria office were the primary contributors to the Operational expense deficit of $503,143. These items were more than offset by higher than budgeted recoveries primarily from Statistics Canada to fund the National Routing System project and the sale of commemorative certificates. Office expense items such as training, postal costs and employee awards were the other significant contributors to the operational expense deficit.

As noted above higher than budgeted operational expenses were more than offset by higher than budgeted recoveries. Internal recoveries increased as more ministries use vital statistics data and services and external recoveries increased as a result of National Routing System recoveries, increased sales of commemorative and genealogical certificates and increased research services to external organizations.

Capital expenditures were close to the planned levels with the significant exceptions being the increase of $200,000 from the Provincial Contingencies vote to provide for a scope expansion of the vital statistics data warehouse project and reallocation of a significant portion of the vehicle allocation to enable the Agency to acquire more personal computers and peripheral equipment. The vehicle requirement was fulfilled through an operating lease.

The capital allocation for fiscal 2000/01 was under spent by $34,512.

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2000/01

STOB		BUDGET 2000/01	ACTUAL 2000/01	VARIANCE 2000/01
50	BASE SALARIES	3,926,000	3,965,943	(39,943)
51	SUPPLEMENTARY SALARIES	50,000	40,851	9,149
52	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	677,000	718,631	(41,631)
	TOTAL SALARIES AND BENEFITS	**4,653,000**	**4,725,425**	**(72,425)**
57	TRAVEL	55,000	69,336	(14,336)
60	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	12,000	9,987	2,013
61	ADVISORY CONTRACTS	22,000	8,585	13,415
63	INFORMATION SYSTEMS	1,161,000	1,553,306	(392,306)
65	OFFICE AND BUSINESS EXPENSES	550,000	602,272	(52,272)
68	STATUTORY NOTICES	111,000	127,345	(16,345)
69	UTILITIES/MATERIALS/SUPPLIES	30,000	21,178	8,822
70	OPERATING EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES	23,000	8,217	14,783
73	AMORTIZATION EXPENSE	415,000	398,499	16,501
75	BUILDING OCCUPANCY CHARGES	559,000	641,479	(82,479)
	INTEREST AND OTHER EXPENSES	0	939	(939)
	TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	**2,938,000**	**3441,143**	**(503,143)**
76	GRANTS	17,000	15,000	2,000
78	CONTRIBUTIONS	56,000	29,630	26,370
	TOTAL GRANTS	**73,000**	**44,630**	**28,370**
	GROSS OPERATING EXPENDITURES	**7,664,000**	**8,211,198**	**(547,198)**
88	INTERNAL RECOVERIES	(277,000)	(342,324)	65,324
89	EXTERNAL RECOVERIES	(395,000)	(998,302)	603,302
	TOTAL RECOVERIES	**(672,000)**	**(1,340,626)**	**668,626**
	NET OPERATING EXPENDITURES	**6,992,000**	**6,870,572**	**121,428**
	REVENUES	**9,261,037**	**9,169,721**	**(91,316)**
	SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE	**2,269,037**	**2,299,149**	**30,112**
	FULL TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEES	**97.00**	**96.11**	**0.89**
CAPITAL ASSET ACQUISITIONS				
	INFORMATION SYSTEMS	598,000	576,140	21,860
	OPERATING EQUIPMENT	17,000	17,321	(321)
	OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	40,000	37,027	2,973
	VEHICLES	10,000	0	10,000
	TOTAL CAPITAL ASSET ACQUISITIONS	665,000	630,488	34,512

2.2. REVENUE 2000/01

Actual revenues for the Agency in fiscal 2000/01 were $91,316 below estimates. The major areas where actual revenues did not match targets were the sale of birth certificates and filing of wills notices. Both of these services appear to be affected by lessening demand for the service with a specific or identifiable cause. Rush service requests have continued to decline as the Vision system has continued to assist in reducing turnaround times on regular service certificate requests to a level where a three day turn around is the norm, and one day turnaround is often achieved. Applications for change of name and marriage certificate sales continue to exceed expectations and help offset the lower than expected revenues discussed above.

	BUDGET 2000/01	ACTUAL 2000/01	VARIANCE 2000/01
BIRTH CERTIFICATION	**3,285,842**	**3,186,879**	**(98,963)**
BIRTH CERTIFICATES AND SEARCHES	2,778,867	2,685,737	(93,130)
RUSH BIRTH CERTIFICATES	471,975	463,042	(8,933)
BIRTH CERTIFIED COPIES	35,000	38,100	3,100
DEATH CERTIFICATION	**1,400,957**	**1,393,872**	**(7,085)**
DEATH CERTIFICATES	1,379,707	1,382,322	2,615
DEATH CERTIFIED COPIES	21,250	11,550	(9,700)
MARRIAGE CERTIFICATION	**405,116**	**493,750**	**88,634**
REGULAR MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES	253,476	356,426	102,950
RUSH MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES	127,890	118,174	(9,716)
MARRIAGE CERTIFIED COPIES	23,750	19,150	(4,600)
CHANGES OF NAME	**516,231**	**586,228**	**69,997**
NAME CHANGES - APPLICANT	451,206	551,699	100,493
CHANGE OF NAME - ADDITIONAL PERSONS	52,798	22,950	(29,848)
CHANGE OF NAME - CERTIFICATES	12,227	11,579	(648)
WILLS	**1,278,431**	**1,093,131**	**(185,300)**
WILLS SEARCHES	281,127	286,030	4,903
WILLS NOTICES	997,304	807,101	(190,203)
MARRIAGE LICENCES	**2,190,000**	**2,188,950**	**(1,050)**
CIVIL MARRIAGES	**886,950**	**918,275**	**31,325**
REGISTRATION AMENDMENTS	**51,409**	**51,354**	**(55)**
MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES	**20,000**	**945**	**(19,055)**
DISHONOURED CHEQUES	**4,000**	**13,893**	**9,893**
TOTAL GROSS REVENUES	**10,038,937**	**9,927,277**	**(111,660)**
COMMISSIONS DEDUCTED FROM REVENUE	**(747,900)**	**(735,325**	**12,575)**
SERVICE PROVIDERS	(38,000)	(11,302)	26,698
BC ON-LINE WILLS NOTICES	(24,000)	(26,930)	(2,990)
BC ON-LINE WILLS SEARCHES	(7,000)	(6,963)	37
MARRIAGE LICENCE ISSUERS	(87,600)	(82,470)	5,130
MARRIAGE COMMISSIONERS	(591,300)	(607,600)	(16,300)
ALLOWANCE FOR DOUBTFUL ACCOUNTS	**(30,000)**	**(22,231)**	**7,769**
TOTAL REVENUES	**9,261,037**	**9,169,721**	**(91,316)**

3. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The major goals of the Agency are to contain costs and at the same time provide increased service volumes, improved efficiency and effectiveness, and an increased level of customer satisfaction. The performance measures detailed on the following pages are used to determine the extent to which the Agency is meeting its strategic goals; specifically goals 1, 2, 3 and 6 as defined in the Framework Agreement and Business Plan. The measures in the tables on the following pages are designed, through comparison of target to actual results, to report on the Agency's ability to meet targets established in the Business Plan. Management also uses them for service evaluation and planning.

Service volume measures are used to confirm whether or not the number of services being provided meet expectations. Management also uses this information to track trends for planning new programs and determining resource allocations.

Unit Costs represent a merger of expenditure and service volume information and are used to determine if the Agency is obtaining economic efficiency as a result of its efforts to streamline processing operations and provide more services at less cost. This measure also enables the Agency to gauge its economic efficiency during periods of decreasing service demand.

Service Standards - Days to Complete Service is a measure to determine if the Agency is meeting objectives of reducing turnaround time; this measure is important because Agency customers increasingly need faster turnaround on documents and services. This measure is also used to monitor the effect of processing changes designed to reduce turnaround times.

Customer Satisfaction – Based on customer feedback these measures determine if service delivery, staff training and quality service initiatives are being effective.

In general the following tables indicate that while volumes did not grow as projected, unit costs were reduced below target levels (a result of reduced spending). Service turnaround times were reduced significantly more than originally targeted and customer satisfaction increases met or exceeded projected levels.

3.1. VOLUMES

		Forecast	Actual	Variance
Certificates				
	Birth Certificates	131,371	122,295	(9,076)
	Marriage Certificates	34,434	37,766	3,332
	Death Certificates	51,100	50,760	(340)
	Total Certificates	**216,905**	**210,821**	**(6,084)**
Registrations				
	Birth Registrations	46,314	40,772	(5,542)
	Notice of Birth	46,314	40,772	(5,542)
	Marriage Registrations	21,900	21,794	(106)
	Death Registrations	28,818	27,758	(1,060)
	Total Registrations	**143,346**	**131,096**	**(12,250)**
Wills				
	Wills Search	12,556	19,379*	6,823
	Wills Notices	58,665	47,212	(11,453)
	Total Wills	**71,221**	**66,591**	**(4,630)**
Marriage Licence Applications		**21,900**	**21,890**	**(10)**
Change of Name		**5,249**	**5,044**	**(205)**
Other Services				
	Commemorative Certificates	2,470	5,066	2,596
	Registration Amendments	1,904	1,902	(2)
	Genealogy	1,647	2,717	1,070
	Adoption Records	800	763	(37)
	Certified Photocopies	1,600	3,037	1,437
	Total Other	**8,421**	**13,485**	**5,064**

*Note: Includes searches for alias names.

Volumes for birth certificate sales reflect the falling provincial birth rate also reflected in the lower than expected birth registration and notice of birth filing volumes. Marriage certificate sales volumes are higher than expected given that the provincial marriage rate is falling faster than expected. This is possibly due to increased requirements for couples to provide proof of marriage for joint financial transactions and when one spouse assumes the others surname.

The decreasing trend associated with the filing of will notices continues though there has been an increase in search of wills notice activity.

Increases in the demand for other services especially commemorative certificates and genealogy services help offset the decreasing demand for the agencies traditional registration and certification services experienced in the past couple of years.

3.2. UNIT COSTS

	Target	Actual	Variance
Regular Certificates	15.05	14.37	(0.69)
Rush Certificates	33.54	32.00	(1.54)
Registrations	14.58	13.91	(0.67)
Wills Searches	17.05	16.26	(0.79)
Wills Notices	6.74	6.43	(0.31)
Marriage Licences	12.32	11.75	(0.57)
Regular Change of Name - Applicant	119.08	113.60	(5.48)
Change of Name - Additional Persons	15.05	14.36	(0.69)
Other	33.76	32.21	(1.55)

In fiscal 2000/01 the Agency continued to reduce its unit costs in all service areas and perform better than targets forecast in the Agency Business Plan. The reduction in unit costs is primarily a reflection of the effort to reduce expenditure levels at a faster rate than the volume of services in some areas of the business decrease. The effect of these efforts was to increase recoveries, which in turn resulted in a net operating surplus of $121,428.

Details on the calculation of unit costs are published in section 2.5.1 of the 1999 - 2004 Agency Business Plan.

3.3. SERVICE STANDARDS - DAYS TO COMPLETE

	Forecast	Actual	Variance
Certificates	5	3	2
Registrations	65	36	29
Wills Notices	4	3	1
Wills Searches	5	4	1
Marriage Licences	1	1	0
Change of Name	15	12	3
Other	15	9	6
Percentage of Units Completed	85%	85%	0

The Agency met or performed better than all of its service standard targets in fiscal 2001. Of note are the substantial reductions in turnaround time on the event registration process and the certificate production process. These results are due primarily to the fax transmission of Notices of Birth and registrations of death from hospitals and funeral homes and also the processing efficiencies of the VISION system.

3.4. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

		Target	Actual	Variance
Courtesy	Excellent	60%	66%	6%
	Good	32%	27%	-5%
	Acceptable	6%	5%	-1%
	Below Standard	1%	1%	0%
	Poor	1%	1%	0%
Helpfulness	Excellent	58%	65%	7%
	Good	30%	27%	-3%
	Acceptable	7%	6%	-1%
	Below Standard	2%	1%	-1%
	Poor	2%	1%	-1%
Promptness	Excellent	60%	67%	7%
	Good	27%	24%	-3%
	Acceptable	8%	6%	-2%
	Below Standard	2%	1%	-1%
	Poor	2%	2%	0%

Survey returns indicated a better than targeted response on customer satisfaction surveys in all but three areas.

Responses indicating positive satisfaction (acceptable to excellent) positively exceeded targets by a net of five percent while negative satisfaction responses (below standard or poor) varied positively from target by a net of three percent. Overall there was a significant movement from acceptable and good responses to excellent in all categories.

A regional manager follows up all negative responses and survey results are reviewed at quarterly management meetings. Actions taken as a result of survey data include workflow reviews to identify and correct processing problems, and staff training initiatives to improve courtesy and helpfulness.

4. REGISTRY OPERATIONS

4.1. BIRTH REGISTRY

4.1.1. Streamline the Receipt of Birth Notices from Hospitals, Physicians and Midwives

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to obtain notices of birth (NOB) from hospitals by facsimile and promote electronic transmission of notice of birth data directly from hospital ADT systems. In Fiscal 2000/01 the plan called for 50% of NOB's to be received by facsimile and 4% by electronic transmission from ADT systems.
WHAT WE DID	At present the Agency receives 98% of NOB's from hospitals/physicians and registered midwives by facsimile. To date no NOB's are received by electronic transmission from hospital ADT systems.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency has been very successful in persuading the originators of notices of birth to use facsimile for submission. This has meant that follow-up with originators has been far more effective resulting in a significant reduction in the time required to receive notices of birth and a significant reduction in correspondence with parents. There are still significant technical barriers to overcome before the Agency will be able to obtain notices of birth electronically from hospital ADT systems.
FUTURE PLANS	Continue with the facsimile systems in place; develop a guidebook to assist in the correct completion of the NOB and develop a pilot for electronic submission of NOB's either by ADT or Web interface by the end of the life of this business plan.

4.1.2. Obtaining Registrations of Births from Birth Parents Electronically

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to investigate the feasibility of obtaining signatures of parents on birth registration forms electronically.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency determined that at present there are considerable barriers to be overcome prior to being able to implement acceptance of electronic signatures from birth parents. However, the Agency did implement a pilot project of accepting Birth Registration via facsimile from the Ministry of Children and Families and from Government Agent Offices and initiated a feasibility study of creating a Web version of the Registration of Live Birth.
WHAT THIS MEANS	It will be sometime before the Agency will be able to implement acceptance of electronic signatures and therefore, accept registrations of live birth electronically. The pilot project of accepting live birth registrations by facsimile has been successful in reducing the time it takes to register a birth and issue a birth certificate.
FUTURE PLANS	The success of the facsimile pilot will result in an expansion of the program to offices other than those currently faxing documents. The Agency will continue its investigations and feasibility study into use of a Web version of the registration of live birth and acceptance of electronic signatures from parents.

4.1.3. Physician/Coroner and Funeral Home - Stillbirth Registrations

WHAT WE PLANNED	Due to the low number of occurrences the Agency planned to improve the forms in use where possible but also planned to continue the use of paper forms for submission of stillbirth registrations.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency investigated the possibility of eliminating the requirement of parents signatures on these forms in an effort to reduce the hardship on parents. Agency legal advice was that such a change in practice would require a change to the *Vital Statistics Act*. The Agency proposed changes to the *Vital Statistics Act* though was advised that legislative priorities precluded submission of the proposed changes to the legislature at this time.

WHAT THIS MEANS	The registration of Stillbirth events will continue to require the signatures of parent(s) in the same manner as the registration of birth.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to propose changes to the *Vital Statistics Act* in order to simplify the stillbirth registration process for grieving parents.

4.1.4. Birth Registration Handling in Vital Statistics Offices

WHAT WE PLANNED	Agency plans include the development of processes to simplify and increase the accuracy of linking Notices of Birth to Registration of Live Birth Forms. The Agency will continue to microfilm documents in the short term but will implement alternative electronic storage solutions as they become available to streamline Agency operations.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency developed a report detailing "unlinked birth" documents which is run on a daily basis. This report shows all Registration of Live Birth Forms that have not been linked to their associated Notice of Birth document. Alternative electronic storage solutions have been investigated but have been determined to be too costly to pursue at this time.
WHAT THIS MEANS	When both documents are actually present they can be linked and the birth can be registered, otherwise parents or hospitals may then be contacted concerning documents not received. In addition minor errors can be identified and resolved during this process. Use of the "unlinked births" report has resulted in the prompt identification of NOB documents that are outstanding and require submission by birthing hospitals. Manual linking of the two documents has allowed for a more timely registration process, which in turn reduces the number of outstanding birth certificate requests because of missing or incomplete documents.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to pursue alternative storage media for its paper birth registration documents.

4.2. DEATH REGISTRY (MORTALITY)

4.2.1. Funeral Homes

WHAT WE PLANNED

The Agency plans include the development of processes that enable funeral homes to deliver death registrations and medical certificates of death to the Agency by facsimile or via the Internet. By the end of fiscal 2001 the Agency targets for 60% of funeral homes to submit by facsimile and 8% to submit via the Internet. The Agency also planned to solicit funeral homes to participate in Wills Registry activities by accepting Will Searches on behalf of the Agency. The Agency targeted 34% of funeral homes to participate in this activity by the end of fiscal 2001.

WHAT WE DID

By the end of fiscal 2001 all funeral homes were submitting medical certificates of death and death registrations by facsimile. The Agency developed a program for the submission of death data via the Internet linked to Agency's VISION computer system.

No procedures were developed in regards to participation in Wills Search activities.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Vital Statistics receive death registration forms via facsimile within 15 days of the date of death in most cases. The Agency and Funeral Homes are very close to being able to exchange data electronically via the Internet.

FUTURE PLANS

The remaining issues surrounding data security will be addressed in the near future, which should result in the implementation of the planned Internet submission of death registration forms.

The Agency will continue its plans to work with Funeral Homes in the development of a program for the participation in Wills Search activities, which should be completed by the end of the 2002 fiscal year.

4.2.2. Coroner

WHAT WE PLANNED

The Agency planned to facilitate the delivery of medical certificates of death from Coroners to funeral homes by facsimile for 75% of Coroners by the end of fiscal 2001. This was to be followed by the investigation of the potential for computerizing the form and sending it via the Internet.

	Further discussions will be undertaken as to the value, interest and support for the development of such an option.
WHAT WE DID	Indicators from the funeral home association are that the coroners have fully embraced the use of facsimile for submitting medical certificates of death. Virtually all coroners now use this means. The Agency did not have sufficient technical resources in fiscal 2001 to develop programs for coroners to submit to funeral homes over the Internet.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Coroners will continue to prepare and complete Medical Certificates of Death manually though the process is significantly faster now they are submitting by facsimile.
FUTURE PLANS	During 2001/2002 the Agency will initiate direct discussions with the Coroners' Service to confirm interest and support for the development of a PC program to facilitate completion of Medical Certificates of Death.

4.2.3. Physician

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to encourage physicians to submit medical certificates of death to funeral homes by facsimile.
WHAT WE DID	Follow-up correspondence to Funeral Homes outlined the benefits of accepting and, in fact, encouraging receipt of the Medical Certificate of Death form by facsimile from physicians as well as coroners.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The participation by physicians has been very good. Approximately 75% of physicians submit their medical certificates to funeral homes in this manner. Any problems with facsimile copies have been addressed directly with Funeral Homes, and staff of the Agency have worked with the Funeral Directors to correct any hardware issues affecting good quality facsimiles.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to investigate the potential for a completely electronic system for filing a medical certificate of death by physicians with both the funeral home and the Agency to eliminate paper and ensure data quality.

4.2.4. Vital Statistics Offices

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency plans to continue microfilming Medical Certificates of Death and Death Registration forms but will investigate the possibility of electronic storage through digital imaging.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency digitally imaged all death registrations and Medical Certificates of Death for the period 1986 to 1999 in order to test the applicability of using images in the medical coding process. This was done as part of an initiative to re-code records from this period using the newly implemented ICD-10 coding requirements.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The time involved in resolving ICD-9 to ICD-10 medical codes was dramatically reduced due to easier access facilitated using the electronic medium.
FUTURE PLANS	The success of this digital imaging project has shown both the viability and value that digital images can provide. A review of this project will be completed to assess the potential of using this process in other areas of the Agency.

4.3. MARRIAGE REGISTRY

4.3.1. Religious Representatives

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to enable Religious Representatives to electronically register marriages and issue marriage licenses.
WHAT WE DID	An Agency *Information Update* was sent to all Religious Body Governing Authorities for distribution to their religious representatives, authorizing and encouraging the transmission of marriage registration documents via toll-free facsimile directly to the Agency. The issuance of marriage licenses was unable to be delegated due to technology requirements that could not be met.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The facsimile transmission of marriage registration documents reduces certificate production time by approximately 4-5 working days. Initial application of the facsimile option has been limited to approximately 5% of all religious marriage events. Though the Agency upgraded its business systems to the latest version required, there are compatibility issues with the religious representatives' systems.

FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to promote the use of facsimile transmission of marriage registration documents. An additional informational update will be scheduled for distribution during 2001/2002. Work is continuing to provide web-based services to religious representatives through a mutually accessible system.

4.3.2. Marriage Commissioners

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to enable Marriage Commissioners to electronically register marriages and issue marriage licenses.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency continues to pursue the goal of increased electronic registration of marriages and issuance of marriage licenses. There is full participation from Marriage Commissioners for "rush" certification but the response is lower for regular submissions.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Marriage Commissioners are using the option to transmit event documentation by facsimile on an increasing basis. This has the effect of reducing registration times and providing the client with their certification on a more immediate basis. However, this option has been limited to those who have their own fax machine as those without are unwilling to absorb the cost themselves.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to pursue increased Marriage Commissioner participation in the facsimile program while attempting to overcome existing technological difficulties that will allow the application of web-based services. This will allow the provision of "one-stop shopping" by clientele as they will be able to purchase a license, have the ceremony performed and receive their certificate all at the same location.

4.3.3. Marriage Licence Issuers

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to pursue the electronic submission of marriage registrations and licenses through the Internet by Government Agents and other commissioned service providers.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency upgraded its Oracle based business system, VISION, to the latest web enabled version. However, security issues prevented implementation of web-based services in fiscal 2000/2001.

WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency is now in a position to determine what is required to address security issues and commence development necessary to bring this option to our service providers.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to work toward the successful implementation of web-based marriage license issuance in fiscal 2001/2002.

4.3.4. Marriage Certificates

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to increase the number of service providers issuing marriage certificates through internet access.
WHAT WE DID	In April of 1998, the fee regulation associated with marriage licenses was amended to provide for the automatic issuance of a large marriage certificate upon subsequent filing of a couple's registration of marriage. As a consequence of this initiative, the planned development of dedicated stand-alone software and web technology to allow marriage commissioners and other service providers to issue marriage certificates was discontinued.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The information detailed in the Agency's Strategic Business Plan is no longer applicable as the need for the suggested service is no longer value added or cost effective.
FUTURE PLANS	There are no future plans as the objectives of this initiative have been met.

4.4. CHANGE OF NAME REGISTRY

4.4.1. Change of Name Processing

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to streamline change of name processing to reduce high unit costs. To address one aspect of this goal, the Agency planned to approach other provinces to seek agreement on the automatic production of the applicable provincial birth certificate regardless of birthplace.

WHAT WE DID	Through review of existing processes, the unit costs for a regular change of name application were reduced by $ 6.62 from the initial target of $120.22 as of the end of fiscal 2001. A standardized application form was created and forwarded to all provinces to assess interest in submitting applications for the applicable provincial birth certificate at the time of name change notification.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The reaction to the idea has been less positive than anticipated. The final decision as to whether to offer this service to clients will be dependent on which provinces have shown an interest in participating.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will tabulate the results of the proposal, and address the issue at the next Canadian Vital Statistics Council meeting in June 2001. The Agency will continue to ensure costs of processing changes of name are minimized.

4.4.2. Archiving Supporting Documents

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to assess the use of digital imaging for document archiving and retrieval.
WHAT WE DID	As part of the medical coding conversion from ICD-9 to ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases), the Agency had digital images of death registrations and Medical Certificates of Death (MCOD) produced for the years 1986 to 1999. This project served as a test of digital imaging technology for Vital Statistics document processing.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Digital images have proven to be a viable and effective alternative to paper records for the purpose of reviewing documentation.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will explore the possibility of producing digital images as a routine part of the data entry process and determine if the required archival microfilm can be produced directly from these images to eliminate additional steps associated with preparing paper documents for the filming process.

4.4.3. Reports to External Registries

WHAT WE PLANNED	In order to enhance timeliness, the Agency will pursue an electronic means of transmitting change of name documents directly to other provinces.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency has developed a system generated report to each Canadian province containing the particulars of name changes that will affect their vital event records. This has replaced the individual transmission of each event record with a weekly report.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The new processes have significantly reduced the transmission time of change of name record to other provinces.
FUTURE PLANS	With the creation of the new national routing system there exists the possibility of all provincial vital event data being available on-line, thereby eliminating the requirements for paper records.

4.4.4. Gazetteer of Change of Name

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to investigate changing the *Name Act* to replace local newspaper advertising of a person's intent to change their name with advertising on the Agency's web site.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency researched this proposal with solicitors and determined the necessary legislative amendments required to make this happen.
WHAT THIS MEANS	This proposed change will be subject to the priorities of the legislature.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will put forward a proposal for a legislative change at the first opportunity that will allow advertising on the web rather than in a local paper.

4.5. WILLS NOTICE REGISTRY

4.5.1. Registration of Wills Notices

WHAT WE PLANNED	To increase the electronic filing and registration of Wills Notices, the Agency planned for receipt of 25,500 through the Access BC application and 500 through a secure web application in fiscal 2000/01.

WHAT WE DID	The Agency received and registered a total of 17,993 wills notices through Access BC. None were filed as a result via secure web transactions as the web transaction for this application was not made available to users in fiscal 2000/01.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency fell short of its expectations of increasing submission of Wills Notices via Access BC and introducing the facility to file wills notices via the web. Part of the shortfall in Access BC transactions is due to more than 10,000 fewer Wills Notices being filed in fiscal 2000/01 than originally targeted.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to continue with the development of a secure Internet server in 2001/02 to accommodate the submission of Wills Notices via the web and to encourage Access BC in increasing its market share of Wills Notices filed.

4.5.2. Wills Notice Searches

WHAT WE PLANNED	To process an estimated 12,556 Wills Notices Searches in 2000/01. A total of 6,000 were to be received through the Access BC application, 150 through the Secure Web application and 6,406 by mail.
WHAT WE DID	A total of 10,857 Wills Notice forms were processed by the Agency in 2000/01. 4,462 were received electronically through the Access BC application, and 6,215 were received through the mail.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency fell short of its expectations of increasing submission of Wills Notice Searches via Access BC. The Agency did not complete plans for implementing a secure web service for applying for services in fiscal 2000/01.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to continue with the development of a secure Internet server in 2001/02 to accommodate the submission of Wills Searches via the web and to encourage Access BC in expanding its business.

4.5.3. Vital Statistics Agency

WHAT WE PLANNED	Agency plans to explore the use of digital imaging technology as an alternative electronic storage medium for the storage and access of copies for Wills Notices documents.

WHAT WE DID

A microfilm digital scanner reader was purchased as part of the Agency's need to replace its older microfilm reader/printers. To assist with the conversion of medical coding from the ICD 9 to ICD 10 by providing on-line access to the required documents, the Agency undertook to digitally image death registrations from 1986 to 1999.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The microfilm digital scanner reader has enabled the Agency to create electronic images of documents and electronically transmit individual records to clients and between offices.

The digital imaging of death registrations has allowed the Agency to experiment with the storage and use of imaged records.

FUTURE PLANS

The Agency will continue to explore the use of digital imaging technology as an alternative electronic storage medium for microfilm, however the two major concerns related to the durability of electronically stored records and the future conversion of images resulting from systems changes appear to be significant issues to be resolved prior to the decision to pursue this alternative can be made.

5. SUPPORT SERVICES STRATEGY

5.1. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT

5.1.1. Performance Measurement

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Support Services Branch plan for 1999/2000 included undertaking a quality assessment survey of current Agency Operations in support of a quality improvement plan for completion by March 31, 2000.
WHAT WE DID	The quality improvement plan was completed as scheduled. In fiscal 2000/01 the Support Services Branch and Agency have worked on implementing various aspects of the quality improvement plan that relate to performance measurement. These have included a review of the employee performance planning and review process, streamlining the gathering of performance measure data concerning turnaround times and taking a leading role in the Senior Financial Officers (SFO) Council initiative for reviewing and recommending performance measures related to financial accountability.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency is continuously upgrading performance measurement and monitoring within the Agency to assist in improving performance and enhancing accountability as well as making the results of its research and experience available to all ministries in the provincial government.
FUTURE PLANS	Continuous improvement of work unit and employee planning and review processes to ensure measures are relevant and reasonable; completion of the review and recommendations relating to performance measures for the SFO Council; and, adoption of additional measures identified in the SFO Council review.

5.1.2. Financial and Performance Reporting

WHAT WE PLANNED	To prepare and submit quarterly reports to Treasury Board staff including both financial and organizational performance information. To prepare an annual report on the financial and organizational performance of the Agency following the end of the fiscal year that included status reports on the various projects detailed in the business plan and the status of the implementation of the Framework Agreement. To make the annual report available to a wide range of interested parties.

WHAT WE DID	Reports to Treasury Board Staff were prepared, submitted and accepted as scheduled. The annual report was prepared and submitted to Treasury Board as scheduled and will be made available in print form to selected parties, the legislative library, and to interested members of the public through the Agency Website.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency continues to meet its plans for financial and performance reporting and has ensured compliance with the reporting requirements of the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act.
FUTURE PLANS	The agency will continue to meet its reporting plan as well as the reporting requirements of government and will continue to seek ways to enhance content and access to its financial and performance reports.

5.2. HISTORICAL VITAL EVENT RECORDS

5.2.1. Release of Historical Vital Event Records

WHAT WE PLANNED	To prepare microfilm copies and restore vital event indices as necessary to ensure that vital event records can be released in the year in which they are eligible for release. Birth records may be released 100 years after the birth; marriage records 75 years after the marriage; and, death records 20 years after the death. The Agency also planned to investigate the release of other records in its possession, such as early church records.
WHAT WE DID	By the end of fiscal 2000/01 microfilm and indices for births, deaths and marriages had been put in condition for release as scheduled up to and including 2008. Births to 1900, Marriages to 1925 and deaths to 1980 are now available in libraries, at the British Columbia Archives Reading Room, and through the Genealogical Society of Utah. All of these events may be searched on the World Wide Web using the vital records index search facilities on the BC Archives website. During 2000/01 the Agency also added its records of overseas war casualties representing persons who were born or resided in BC who died overseas in World War II. To facilitate increased access and implement an e-commerce solution, the Agency and BC Archives, through a partnership with VitalChek Inc. have made these records available for purchase by credit card and delivery by e-mail.

WHAT THIS MEANS	Vital event records that can be released will be made available to the public as soon as it is legally possible to do so, at least up until the year 2008. War casualty records that have not been publicly available are now easily accessible. The implementation of the electronic payment and delivery system through the three-way partnership between VitalChek, BC Archives and the Agency has extended access to these records worldwide.
FUTURE PLAN	A project is underway to make available baptismal records for events that occurred between 1837 and 1900. This information which is currently in a manual form will be developed into an on-line index that will be available through the British Columbia Archives Web site. As there is only one copy of large portions of the Agency's early microfilm records, a project has been initiated to re-microfilm births that occurred between 1919 to 1946 to ensure high quality copies of these records are available when they are released for public access.

5.2.2. Restoration of Historical Indices

WHAT WE PLANNED	The agency plan since 1998 is to fully restore birth record indices from 1900 to 1940 as the tapes containing this data were found to be irreparably damaged. The plan is to complete this project by the end of the term of this business plan.
WHAT WE DID	The indices for the period 1900 to 1918 were restored by archives volunteers as part of a project to prepare older birth records for their eventual release. The indices for the period 1930 to 1940 were restored in fiscal 2000/01 as part of extending the loading of birth information back to 1930.
WHAT THIS MEANS	As of the end of fiscal 2000/01 the indices have been restored except for the period 1919 to 1929.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to complete the restoration of the damaged indexes by the end of fiscal 2002/03.

5.2.3. Historical Birth and Death Project

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency will complete the data entry of missing certificate information for birth records back to 1940 to facilitate automatic birth certificate production. The emphasis will then shift to death records to enable a complete matching of death to birth records.
WHAT WE DID	The addition of missing certificate information from the electronic copy of birth records was completed back to 1930.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The birth registry system is now capable of automatically issuing certificates on complete and correct applications back to 1930. The requirement to refer to microfilm when a birth certificate is requested has been reduced from 40% of requests to five percent. The birth data entry portion of this project is now complete, though the Agency may add missing birth information going back to 1919 as part of the index restoration project.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will review the status of death record data in its possession as well as that maintained by Statistics Canada to determine the requirements for completion of this project. The Agency continues to plan for ensuring that enough data has been captured by the end of fiscal 2003/04 to match death to birth records for deceased persons born after 1930.

5.2.4. Data Quality Initiatives

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Registration Audit Unit planned to focus on the earlier and more complete detection of errors as well as the development of appropriate corrective actions to reduce the number of errors on registration documents received. To assist physicians and attendants in the completion of the Notice of Birth form, instructions will be incorporated on the reverse side and a separate physician's guide will be developed for quick reference.
WHAT WE DID	In order to reduce the number of errors on a Notice of Birth the Agency published an article in the Physician's Newsletter outlining the importance of completing the form correctly and submitting it on a timely basis. The article included descriptions of how data included on these forms is used in health statistics for health planning. In addition a follow-up program has been started to review data errors

with individual hospitals to address specific concerns with these institutions.

The agency program of obtaining Notice of Birth and Death Registration documents by fax has been an important step in resolving data quality concerns. This is because the Agency is able to advise the sender of any data concerns within a very short period of time after the hospital or funeral home faxes the document.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Greater understanding of the importance of Notice of Birth information on the part of physicians and hospitals responsible for completing the form will help improve data quality, therefore, enabling the agency to produce better and more accurate health information for health planning purposes. More timely return of birth and death documents assists in resolving issues more easily and on a more timely basis, thereby enabling the Agency to provide better data faster.

FUTURE PLANS

The Agency plans to complete the development and distribution of a physician's guide to the completion of the Notice of Birth form in 2001/02. Ongoing communication will continue with hospitals and physician's to correct any data quality problems identified and to ensure legislated requirements are being met.

5.3. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

5.3.1. Transfer Payroll Function from Ministry of Health

WHAT WE PLANNED

Since its inception the Agency has planned to arrange for the transfer of the payroll function for the Agency from the Ministry Financial Services Division to complete its establishment as a fully independent entity.

WHAT WE DID

Plans have continued to be placed on hold while the government determines the outcome of its investigations into restructuring of payroll services for all of government.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The Agency continues to experience some inefficiencies and delays resulting from not controlling the processing of its own payroll and lacks the ability to implement improvements that could streamline the payroll process.

FUTURE PLANS

The Agency plans to wait until the government firmly establishes its direction for payroll and if possible, present its case for assuming the payroll function.

5.3.2. Policy and Procedure Documentation

WHAT WE PLANNED	For 2000/01 the Finance and Administration Unit planned to write and update internal policy and procedure documents as necessary to bring Agency financial process documentation up to date.
WHAT WE DID	Documented procedures for all major activities of the Finance Unit that differed from the standard procedures of government. Developed and implemented new policies and procedures for processing service provider transactions and refunds of revenue.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Finance Unit staff have their procedures properly documented thereby ensuring like transactions are processed in the same manner and persons from outside the unit have a documented source of information that explains how various processes are undertaken in the unit.
FUTURE PLANS	The unit will continue to seek to identify areas where written procedures are required and review activities to ensure written documentation reflects actual practice.

5.3.3. E-Commerce

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to restrict the acceptance of cheques as a means of payment of over the counter payments in regional offices by promoting alternative access to its services through direct order over the telephone, facsimile and internet submission in order to reduce the incidence of NSF cheques.
WHAT WE DID	By the end of fiscal 1999/2000 the Agency was receiving 25% of its service payments (not including marriage licence and civil marriage ceremony fees) through alternate payment methods. This has increased to greater than 33% in fiscal 2001.
WHAT THIS MEANS	This means that efforts to increase the use of alternative methods of payment have been effective. Unfortunately the use of these alternative methods is not at a level that would enable the Agency to restrict the acceptance of cheques, therefore, NSF cheques will continue to be a concern for the Agency in the near future.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to promote alternate methods of payment until it becomes feasible to restrict acceptance of personal cheques for services requested.

5.4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES

5.4.1. Human Resources/ Confidential Services

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency has planned to focus on the promotion of an effective organizational structure, accurate application of job evaluation techniques and the creation of effective information flows and human resources processes throughout the Agency, between the Agency and the Ministry of Health and between the Agency and PSERC.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency continued to promote operational efficiencies through review of each position as it became vacant. Accurate job evaluation techniques were applied to each vacancy in an effort to yield the highest possible classification reflective of the work performed. Effective information flows were maintained throughout the Agency through communication of human resources issues by group meetings, e-mail, and distribution of the Employee Handbook. Communication with Human Resource Headquarters was on a minimal basis as required to achieve business goals.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency continually seeks to attract the best qualified personnel to fill positions at all levels. The accurate evaluation of job duties allows the application of this principle within a framework that matches compensation with the knowledge, skills and abilities required of the position. Creation and distribution of an Employee Handbook served to communicate the expectations of management to all employees. This was an open process that took place over a number of months and allowed employees to participate through provision of feedback in unit meetings. As anticipated, Human Resources Headquarters' function continues to diminish in significance. The relationship continues to be required at this time for consultation on complex matters and for the provision of liaison services between the Agency and PSERC.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to pursue a more autonomous human resources environment. The requirement to conduct human resources business through an intermediate party in some instances negatively impacts the ability of the Agency to pursue business goals in a timely manner.

5.4.2. Consolidation of Adoption Indices

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Confidential Services Branch planned on linking all adoption indices through the creation of a unified MS Excel database to allow the efficient retrieval of adoption related statistics that enhance the ability of the Agency to respond to information requests from a variety of clientele.
WHAT WE DID	Although begun in fiscal 1999/00, this actually remains an ongoing project as there are over 70,000 records involved in the process and the resources required have not been specifically allocated for this project.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The adoption records maintained by the Agency are all intact but have been recorded in a number of different formats. This does not affect the operations or delivery of services to Agency clientele but does not allow the desired statistical analysis.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to work towards linking all adoption indices through the application of additional term specific human resources to allow for completion of this goal in fiscal 2001/2002.

6. REGIONAL SERVICES STRATEGY

6.1. SERVICE DELIVERY AND EFFICIENCY

6.1.1. Community Service Levels

WHAT WE PLANNED

Agency plans include the monitoring of service provider activity through marriage commissioner audits, community and service provider feedback and input from the public on customer satisfaction surveys. The purpose of such monitoring is to identify areas were service provider numbers are inadequate, or where customers, other service providers or members within a community have concerns with a specific service provider or how a specific service has been provided. The agency planned to make greater use of the auditing tools in its Vision system to assist in this monitoring.

WHAT WE DID

In fiscal 2000/01 Vision was used to assist in identifying marriage commissioners for routine audits. The Agency conducted 912 of these audits resulting in 313 positive returns and 3 negative responses requiring follow-up action. In addition the Agency commissioned a study and report regarding service concerns raised by marriage commissioners. The result of the report was for the agency to schedule meetings with all marriage commissioners in the province to obtain their feedback as to how the recommendations of the report could be best implemented and their concerns addressed. These meetings will continue into 2002 at such time the process outcome will be established. Of the almost 5,000 responses to customer satisfaction surveys returned to the Agency only a small portion related to services provided by non-vital statistics staff. Of those received by the Agency only a handful were anything but extremely positive about the service delivered.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The public of British Columbia continues to have an extremely high quality of service delivered through its service provider network. Actions taken in the 2000/01 fiscal year demonstrate the level of Agency support for providing high quality local access for a wide full range of Vital Statistics Services.

FUTURE PLANS

The Vital Statistics Agency will continue to be proactive in utilizing all available information management tools to monitor service levels and demands and to respond to any concerns or issues identified. Marriage commissioner meetings and actions required to meet their concerns will be taken during fiscal 2001/02.

6.1.2. Alternative Service Delivery Sources

WHAT WE PLANNED

During the life of this business plan the Agency will appoint sufficient levels of service providers to enhance access and the availability of vital statistics services at the local community level. During the coming year individual insurance agencies and other institutions will be contacted to determine interest in providing vital statistics services in communities where service shortages may exist.

Meetings will be initiated with experts from the telephone industry to determine the potential for adding IVR options to the existing telephone information "tree". In particular, the ability of clients to ascertain the status of their Application for Service (AFS) related to a birth, marriage or death certificate will be explored. The current VISION client/server computer system would be used as the backbone to support this initiative.

The Agency will provide access to all forms its customers may require from the Agency web-site to enable customers to download the correct form when required. Where practical instructional material will be provided on the web-site to assist clients in completing necessary documents. The Agency will also pursue the development of a national web-site to facilitate access to vital statistics forms for all Canadian jurisdictions thereby ensuring that residents of British Columbia can obtain the correct forms regardless of where their vital event records are located in Canada.

WHAT WE DID

In addition to responding to ongoing service demands and routine service provider attrition, the Agency actively recruited new service providers where required. Successful discussions were followed by 12 appointments of Insurance Agencies as Marriage Licence Issuer centres in the Greater Vancouver Area.

During the 2000/2001 fiscal year over 280 service provider appointments were made including:

- 25 District Registrars;
- 43 Funeral Service Provider staff appointments as District Registrars;
- 28 Government Agent staff appointments (District Registrar & Marriage Licence Issuer);
- 63 Private Marriage Licence Issuer appointments (Includes Insurance Agents & Notaries Public);
- 22 Private Marriage Commissioners; and
- 99 Temporary Marriage Commissioners.

All forms associated with Vital Statistics events in British Columbia are now available on our Web site at http://www.vs.gov.bc.ca/forms/index.html in PDF (Portable Document File) format. A central Vital Statistics web site for Canada with detailed information about each province and territory was developed. This web site at http://www.vscouncil.ca/ has now been successfully implemented and provides links to those vital statistics organisations in Canada that have web sites.

Meetings were held with representatives of Voice Services of the Information Science and Technology Agency (ISTA), Telus and Nortel Networks to determine future options and IVR alternatives available to the Agency. A review of the existing voice network presently in use was also completed.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The public of British Columbia continues to have local access to a full range of vital statistics services through a large service provider network where private sector participation is continuously increasing. The Agency has also been instrumental in enabling individuals whose vital events are recorded in British Columbia and individuals who reside in British Columbia but whose vital records are maintained elsewhere in Canada to obtain the forms and information necessary from the appropriate web site.

FUTURE PLANS

The Agency plans to continue to monitor the service level requirements at the local level to ensure they continue to be appropriate levels and where possible are provided through private sector service providers. In addition the Agency

will continue to develop alternative service delivery options through the Internet and continue its investigation as to the feasibility of utilising IVR technology as a service enhancement or delivery option.

Discussions will be initiated with other jurisdictions such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand to determine if "links" from and to their web sites would be possible. The addition of these links will allow clients a more convenient method of accessing the key vital event information and records that they require.

6.1.3. VitalChek

WHAT WE PLANNED

The Agency planned to increase marketing the option to customers of the purchasing of vital statistics services by credit card through VitalChek. In addition the Agency planned to promote the extension of this service for customers to purchase vital event certificates and digital copies of historical records currently available for public access over the Internet.

WHAT WE DID

VitalChek distributed literature regarding its service to passport offices across Canada and the US and the Agency included information regarding VitalChek service on its web site in order to increase awareness of the service available. The Agency also converted all genealogical marriage and death records spanning the period 1872 to 1923 from microfilm to digital images. In partnership with VitalChek and BC Archives the Agency has made these records available for purchase by credit card through electronic ordering and delivery over the Internet.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The use of credit cards for the purchase of vital event certificates by telephone and by Internet order has increased by 33% in the fiscal 2000/01 fiscal year. Use of this service reduces the effort on the part of the customer tc obtain the service and reduces the time it takes the Agency to deliver. In addition customers are now able to order their genealogical records of marriage and death on the web and receive them 24 hours a day anywhere in the world.

FUTURE PLANS	The Agency, and its partners, plan to continue marketing the ordering of certificates by telephone and Internet using the VitalChek credit card payment option. Recoveries from the sale of images of genealogical records will be used to image more records to further enhance this service as well as provide an alternative storage medium for these records.

6.2. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

6.2.1. Millennium Certificates

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to offer Year 2000 commemorative certificates based upon previous interest in provision of this service.
WHAT WE DID	During fiscal 2000/2001 the Agency issued over 5,000 commemorative birth certificates and over 500 commemorative marriage certificates to British Columbians.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Volume goals were met and surpassed. Commemorative birth certificates were issued for more than 10% of new births and commemorative marriage certificates were issued for almost 5% of new marriages.
FUTURE PLANS	Commemorative certificates will continue to be released to eligible parties as requested and the Agency will continue to look for similar special occasion opportunities to meet its customer's needs.

6.2.2. Commemorative Marriage Certificates

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to design a new Commemorative Marriage Certificate similar to its Commemorative Birth Certificate to replace the Millennium Marriage Certificate available only during the Year 2000.
WHAT WE DID	An analysis of the popularity of the Millennium Commemorative Marriage Certificate and other special occasion marriage certificates was conducted and identified that over 500 certificates were issued out of nearly 22,000 marriages in the Year 2000.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Public interest in a Commemorative Marriage Certificate is very limited. As a result the Agency has determined that greater investigation is required before embarking on this venture.

FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will fully investigate the potential market for a combined Commemorative Anniversary/Marriage certificate and consider the potential of using the existing base design in order to effect cost savings in development and printing.

6.2.3. Marriage Commissioner's Marriage Ceremony Memento

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to review the existing design of the Marriage Commissioners Ceremony Memento. The memento is not a legal certificate but a document that represents the union of the couple until the official certificate is obtained.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency introduced a revised format of the Marriage Commissioner's Marriage Ceremony Memento in 1999/2000. The Agency has since received mixed feedback from the Marriage Commissioners on the new format.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Not all Marriage Commissioners liked the new format and would like to see additional changes.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to monitor comments received from Marriage Commissioners and couples to determine if a consensus for further change can be identified. The possibility of Marriage Commissioners preparing these mementos on a customized basis will be reviewed over the coming year.

6.2.4. Partnership Registry

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned the development of a Partnership Registry for the purpose of registering "marriage-like" relationships. This registry would document the existence of these relationships for the purposes of recognizing benefits and responsibilities flowing to the partners from a particular point in time.
WHAT WE DID	Detailed specifications as to the operation of this registry were completed and draft legislation was prepared for review by senior Ministry and Government officials. The Government chose not to pursue the proposal at this time.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The proposed Partnership Registry will not be developed further at this time.
FUTURE PLANS	None at this time.

6.2.5. Plastic (credit card type) Birth Certificates

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to explore the potential for introduction of a plastic "credit card" type of wallet-sized birth certificate.
WHAT WE DID	Discussions were initiated with other provincial and territorial jurisdictions across Canada to determine what level of interest might exist for an initiative of this nature on a larger, multi-jurisdictional basis. A review of existing alternatives already currently in use in British Columbia was also initiated to determine the potential for like processes to be used for birth certificates.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Review process with other jurisdictions and stakeholders is still underway.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to explore and monitor the developments that are occurring in the credit card industry and will prepare a detailed analysis and proposal for the issuing of birth certificates in this format in the future.

6.2.6. Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Telephone System

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to review the feasibility of purchasing an IVR system for the provision of automated response to clientele when requesting particular service activities.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency reviewed the feasibility of purchasing an IVR system and determined existing applications would not be cost effective. As a result, the Agency redesigned the existing Aspen Telephone Tree system to make it more responsive to customer needs.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The purchase of an IVR system has been placed on hold in favour of upgrading the existing system to provide better service options. The Aspen Tree will be used until a cost effective IVR solution is identified and implemented.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to look for a cost-effective IVR system that will meet the business requirements of the Agency.

6.2.7. Central Clearinghouse Function

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to investigate the feasibility of developing a process whereby parents who require birth certificates for more than one province would be able to obtain them through the completion of a single application form.
WHAT WE DID	No action was taken on this matter during the 2000/2001 fiscal year as it was felt that the objectives of this initiative might be achieved as an outcome of the National Routing System Project.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The National Routing system would allow each provincial jurisdiction to electronically deposit and retrieve vital event information from a central storage database and could include application information. The clearinghouse initiative will be placed on hold until it can be determined whether or not the National Routing system will meet the same objectives.
FUTURE PLANS	A central clearinghouse function will not be pursued unless the National Routing system is unable to meet the objectives of the proposed clearinghouse function.

6.2.8. Validation of birth certificates

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to investigate methods of encoding data on birth certificates to facilitate verification of the holders personal information by enabling a check of the printed information on the certificate to the encoded information to identify any alteration of the printed text.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency investigated this and other similar technologies but found them to be too expensive to consider further at this time. In order to enhance the security of birth certificates the Agency has added a number of additional security features to its stock.
WHAT THIS MEANS	What appeared to be a secure option for identifying certificate tampering will not be implemented by the Agency in the near future due to the prohibitive costs of doing so although the Agency will continue to improve the security features of its documents.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to look for methods of validating the personal information on birth certificates to facilitate detection of document tampering.

6.2.9. Marriage Commissioner Selection and Training

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to monitor technology developments in videoconferencing as well as possible alternatives to aid in the selection and training of marriage commissioners in remote locations of the province.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency continued to assess the feasibility of videoconferencing. Based on feedback from a survey of Marriage Commissioners it was determined that face-to-face interviews and meetings are preferred.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Videoconferencing on a regular basis still proves to be cost prohibitive. Continued personal liaison with the Marriage Commissioner community has the benefit of ensuring continued communication, clear understanding of any program changes, and the ability to address concerns of marriage commissioners.
FUTURE PLANS	Videoconferencing will no longer be pursued for the recruitment of marriage commissioners until changes in technology provide a more cost effective approach. New recruitment practices piloted in the Vancouver Island area will be written up in policy and implemented throughout the province. These new processes will involve an extensive written interview in the community where the individual resides, followed by an in-person oral interview where each of the applicants conducts a mock marriage ceremony in front of a group. This will allow the person conducting the interviews to view potential marriage commissioners "in action".

6.3. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

6.3.1. Legislative Review

WHAT WE PLANNED

The Agency planned to submit a number of legislative proposals that include;

- an amendment to the Vital Statistics Act to allow the addition of a fathers particulars to a birth registration by the director where paternity has been established by the courts;
- an amendment to the Name Act to authorize a criminal records check to be initiated on all legal changes of name applied for by adults;

- an amendment to the Vital Statistics and Name Acts to authorise the establishment of a process for confidentially changing a persons name when they are a victim of a life threatening relationship.

The development, by the Agency, of a registry for registering presumptions of death filed under the Presumption of Death and Survivorship Act.

During 2000/2001 the Agency planned to work closely with the Ministry of Attorney General to review all current legislation in order to assess impact of proposed changes to spousal and marriage definitions.

WHAT WE DID

Legislative proposals were drafted as planned, however they were not placed on the legislative agenda due to other Government and Ministry priorities.

WHAT THIS MEANS

No changes were made to Vital Statistics legislation during 2000/2001.

FUTURE PLANS

The Agency will continue to review its legislation on a yearly basis with the aim of compiling and documenting proposed legislative changes. In addition, all legislation will be reviewed to identify housekeeping changes required to ensure consistency in language and references.

6.3.2. Guidebooks

WHAT WE PLANNED

The Agency plan included regular review of its reference materials to ensure that current policy and procedures were accurately reflected and to publish its policy and procedures manual on an internal web site. Specifically the agency will complete a review of its Marriage Commissioner guidebook and the development of a new guidebook for service providers to better define the collection and transmission of revenue process. In addition the Agency will promote the creation of a standard set of multi-language guidebooks for obtaining vital statistics services in Canada with funding to be provided by Health Statistics Division of Statistics Canada.

WHAT WE DID

The Marriage Commissioner's Guidebook was revised and reformatted to meet current Agency standards. Printing of the revised guidebook was completed in March 2001.

A revised revenue reporting procedure was developed and implemented in order to streamline revenue and service reporting by full service private service providers such as Notary Public offices.

A Multi Language Brochures Committee was struck by the Vital Statistics Council for Canada to investigate the proposal to produce common information brochures for clients of all Canadian Vital Statistics programs in languages other than the official languages of Canada.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Marriage Commissioners now have a more complete and concise guidebook to guide them in the performance of their duties; Notary Publics have a streamlined process for service processing and revenue reporting that reduces workload and provides more timely service to the customer and British Columbia Agency staff will participate in the development of multi-language brochures directed at explaining Vital Statistics services to all Canadians.

FUTURE PLANS

The Agency will continue to review all of its service provider guidebooks regularly. The next series scheduled for review are guidebooks for Marriage Licence Issuers and Funeral Service Providers.

6.4. AUDIT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

6.4.1. Surveys/Customer Satisfaction

WHAT WE PLANNED

The Agency plan included an increase in its customer satisfaction survey beginning in fiscal 1999/2000 and continuing thereafter. The Agency plan also includes following up on all surveys returned indicating a concern or registering a complaint.

WHAT WE DID

The Agency increased the frequency of customer satisfaction surveys as planned and continues to follow-up on all less than satisfactory surveys returned. Results of customer Satisfaction surveys are reported in section 3.4 of this report.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The continued positive response the Agency receives from its customers indicates that the Agency has been successful in addressing the majority of concerns expressed over the years.

FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to continue the existing customer survey program and follow-up process and will develop additional surveys targeted to specific markets such as credit card customers.

6.4.2. Data Standards and Quality/Edit Checks

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency plans for an ongoing review of its birth, death and marriage forms to ensure that all required data elements are collected and that the forms in use communicate the information requirements of the Agency as clearly as possible. The Agency plans to continue its participation in regard to data quality with the Vital Statistics Council for Canada Data Standards and Quality Sub Committee. In fiscal 2000/01 the Agency plans to include edit and validation rules in software distributed to service providers.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency reviewed all of its key data collection forms during the course of the fiscal year and made changes as necessary to clarify requirements for data being collected. In addition the Registration Audit unit worked closely with the Information and Resources Management Unit to identify, analyse and follow up on issues related to data quality in the collection process. The Agency continued to be a member of the Vital Statistics Council for Canada Data Quality Sub Committee, though there was almost no activity this fiscal year. A number of the Agency in-house software packages were upgraded to include validation and edit checks.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The quality of data collected by the Agency is continuously improving and much progress has been made toward obtaining high quality data directly from data sources. This has enabled the Agency to supply its data users with complete and accurate data much faster than previously.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to continue with its current activities directed toward data quality improvement through the life of this business plan.

6.4.3. Performance Measurements

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency planned to enhance a number of its existing performance monitoring and auditing functions to ensure that clients receive optimum service levels from both Agency staff and external services providers. These enhancements include a continuation of the monitoring of

	the use and applicability of the Aspen telephone service and greater use of data from Vision in performance measurement.
WHAT WE DID	Monitoring of the Aspen telephone service has continued as planned and has been extended to the Adjudication Unit for monitoring telephone orders for certificate services. Vision data has been used extensively for monitoring service volumes and is now used for obtaining data on turnaround times for event registration and certificate applications. Many of the performance measures reported in section 3 of this report were obtained using the monitoring tools developed in Vision.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency is now able to identify potential problems in its processes far more effectively and take action on a far more timely basis. The performance measures also contribute greatly to standards development and performance planning.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to continue looking for ways to improve its existing performance measurement program.

6.4.4. Enforcement/Offence Provisions

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency plans include a review of the options available under existing legislation to reinforce the reporting system regarding the enforcement of the offence provisions of the Vital Statistics Act and other Acts administered by the Agency.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency has regularly consulted with its legal counsel to ensure that the offence provisions of the legislation the Agency administers are effectively enforced. Through these consultations and a number of court actions the Agency has established effective enforcement processes for dealing with a number of offense situations that were previously not clear.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency, enforces and supports the enforcement of the offense provisions in legislation it administers to the extent possible.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to continue, with consultation of legal counsel to enforce the offence provisions of the legislation to the extent possible.

7. INFORMATION AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Director of Vital Statistics is mandated by sections 43 and 44 of the *Vital Statistics Act* to publish and distribute statistical information in the public interest respecting the contents of the Agency's registries and to publish an Annual statistical report on vital events registered during the preceding calendar year. The Manager, Information and Resource Management Branch, directs several small niche groups, each with its own area of expertise, but with overlapping responsibilities in the overall development of research products, to meet this legislated obligation.

The groups fall into general categories responsible for:

- Data management,
- Medical Coding,
- Data Analysis,
- Data Dissemination; and
- Publication and Internet Services.

The major projects undertaken by these groups are documented on the following pages.

7.1. DATA WAREHOUSE PROJECT

WHAT WE PLANNED	Phase I of the data warehouse project required a system definition that allowed the specification of data architecture and technical architecture for the capture and maintenance of high quality data extracted from the VISION databases. The system would provide easily retrievable information for the data dissemination group.
WHAT WE DID	An Oracle based system was developed and implemented using Oracle Express, Discoverer and Reports tools. The system infrastructure and processes have been developed and tested.
WHAT THIS MEANS	High quality data reports will be readily available to our internal data users for research purposes.
FUTURE PLANS	The definition and configuration of standard reports and the implementation of end user access tools are yet to be implemented.

7.2. MEDICAL CODING

WHAT WE PLANNED	In conjunction with data analysis and dissemination groups the medical coding group will continue to work on ICD-10 transition issues.
WHAT WE DID	ICD-10 codes are being applied to all new medical data entering the VISION system. In order to maintain the high quality of time series data expected of the Agency, medical coders have mapped death codes from ICD-9 to ICD-10. Where the results were inexact, the coders have recoded those conditions to ICD-10. This work spans death data as far back as 1986, the oldest year for which detailed population estimates are available.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency will be able to continue producing a vast array of mortality time series analyses spanning the two coding systems.
FUTURE PLANS	This work will continue for at least another year, and will be broadened to include birth data and issues relating to the Health Status Registry.

7.3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency produces a large array of data products from its Annual and Quarterly Reports, to health status indicators, to special feature reports, to its monthly reports to medical health officers and daily responses to ad hoc data requests.
WHAT WE DID	The major publication of this fiscal year was the publication of our 129th Annual Report. This document is the first major publication that includes data analysis spanning the ICD-9/10 transition. Additionally the Agency has published:

- Analysis of Health Statistics for Status Indians in British Columbia, 1991-1999, Birth Related and Mortality Summaries, British Columbia and Health Regions (produced for the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Health Canada).
- British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors. Health Status Registry Report, Congenital Anomalies, Genetic Defects, Selected Disabilities, British Columbia to 1998.

- British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors. Pregnancy Counts and Rates by Age Groups by Health Region, British Columbia, 1990/1991 to 1998/1999.

- British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors. Pregnancy Counts and Rates by Age Groups by Local Health Area, British Columbia, 1990/1991 to 1998/1999.

- Kashaninia, Z. "Fire Deaths in British Columbia,1986 to 1998 ",Quarterly Digest 9 (3),March, 2000.

- Kashaninia, Z. "Tuberculosis and Mycobacterium: Impact on Mortality in British Columbia, 1990 to 1999 ",Quarterly Digest 10 (1),October,2000.

- Silver, M. "The Health Status Registry - A Valuable Resource ",Quarterly Digest 10 (2 &3), December,2000.

- Stubbings, T. and Macdonald, J. "Beautiful and Deadly British Columbia: Natural Environmental Deaths,1985 to 1998 ",Quarterly Digest 9 (4),June,2000.

FUTURE PLANS

Now that the initial work has been done on ICD transition issues the focus will be broadened to include birth data and issues relating to the Health Status Registry. There will also be a concerted effort to ensure the validity of our transition work. Current and future data products will be based on the ICD10 coding system

7.4. DESKTOP AND INTERNET SERVICES

WHAT WE PLANNED

The British Columbia Government has implemented new Internet standards. The Agency will work towards meeting these standards in the next fiscal year.

WHAT WE DID

The Vital Statistics Agency portion of the Ministry of Health website has been modified to meet the look and feel of the government standard. All Agency publications including statistical reports, educational material, promotional material and service forms, both in print and electronic format are now prepared by a single work group.

WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency now has a single focal point for the creation of both electronic and traditional published material.
FUTURE PLANS	The desktop and Internet services group will continue to support the Agency's publication requirements.

8. LABOUR RELATIONS STRATEGY

The British Columbia Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) represents the majority of employees within the Agency, while the British Columbia Nurses' Union (BCNU) represents a small number of Community Nurses. Each of these parties have their rights and responsibilities outlined in collective and component agreements that are made available to them upon employment within the Public Service.

In accordance with Section 2 of the British Columbia Labour Relations Code, the Agency encourages co-operative participation between the employer and employees' representative unions in resolving workplace issues, adapting to changes in the economy, developing workforce skills and promoting workplace productivity. To encourage the timely implementation of these objectives, the Agency has secured a human resources manager to act as a conduit to address any issues and concerns between the employer and employees.

Specific goals attached to the maintenance of effective employee relations include:

- the responsible provision of collective agreement interpretation to all employees;
- the timely resolution of all grievances at Step 1 of the grievance process;
- the maintenance of strong working relationships with Union representatives;
- establishing a balance between corporate goals and employee well-being; and
- the ongoing requirement for clear lines of communication between the parties.

The Agency continues to follow the Labour Relations principles as described above in fiscal 2000/2001.

9. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency is committed to the creation of a continuous learning environment and dedicates significant resources toward the achievement of this goal.
WHAT WE DID	In this fiscal year, the Agency has implemented its fiscal 2000/2001 strategy through the creation of a full-time dedicated internal training position. This position is responsible for managing the design, development and evaluation of program specific training and delivery mechanisms that are not available from external service providers. This will include the provision of unique training courses for users of the Agency's VISION database system, new applicants to the Marriage Commissioner program, and any other training initiatives required to assist Agency employees and service providers to reach maximum performance levels.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Having an in house coordinator of human resources development will have a significant positive impact on the abilities and performance of all personnel.
FUTURE PLANS	The coordinator of human resources development will develop and deliver program specific training materials based upon research and analysis of the Agency's business and performance requirements.

10. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

10.1. VISION ENHANCEMENTS

10.1.1. Loading Historical Data

WHAT WE PLANNED	In 2000/2001, the Agency plans to complete the loading of full Birth information onto VISION back to 1930.
WHAT WE DID	All Births are loaded back to 1930.
WHAT THIS MEANS	This will enhance service delivery to clients requiring birth certificates in order to obtain their CPP and OAS benefits by eliminating the time required to look up paper records.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to repair any damaged or incorrect data that appears on the index.

10.1.2. VISION Marketing

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency plans to market the VISION computer system to American states and Canadian provinces and territories.
WHAT WE DID	Four states (Florida, Alaska, Michigan, Ohio) have now purchased the rights to utilize VISION.
WHAT THIS MEANS	These sales are demonstrating the superiority of the product developed at the Agency and provides a source of government revenue leveraging BC-developed assets to support programs for BC residents.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to continue marketing VISION to other American states and Canadian provinces and territories. In addition, other countries and the United Nations continue to express interest.

10.1.3. VISION Upgrade

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency is committed to maintaining VISION at the latest level of technology.
WHAT WE DID	Both the Oracle development environment and the database were upgraded to the latest stable version of this product. The Agency also transferred VISION to a new server computer that uses the latest version of the operating system.

WHAT THIS MEANS	The ability to provide Web entry to service providers has been enhanced, along with the security necessary to keep out intruders.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to upgrade the development environment and database, both to maintain currency and to provide for future growth.

10.1.4. Financial Audit and Reporting

WHAT WE PLANNED	In 2000/2001, Financial recording and reporting will be enhanced.
WHAT WE DID	Many new user-driven financial reports along with a new method for dealing with Rush Fees were implemented into VISION.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Both the Auditing and Financial reporting, and the accounting for Rush services are enhanced to provide stronger accountability for financial transactions.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to perform similar enhancements on the accounting and cash out functions

10.1.5. Character Set Enhancement

WHAT WE PLANNED	During 2000, the Agency will document the business and computer requirements for recording "French only" accent marks on names.
WHAT WE DID	VISION was expanded to use the ISO 8859-1 (Latin 1) multilingual character set.
WHAT THIS MEANS	By January 2002, the Agency will be able to include French accent marks on names in Birth Certificates produced through VISION.
FUTURE PLANS	The Birth Registration form will be re-designed to allow parents to record their child's name in their native language. A certified photocopy of this registration will be made available when a Birth Certificate is requested.

10.1.6. Asset Inventory

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency plans to do an inventory of all Information Technology (I.T.) assets, both hardware and software.

WHAT WE DID	An inventory of both hardware and software was conducted on the over 120 workstations plus all the server computers used by the Agency.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Agency is in compliance with the government requirement for asset tracking. In addition, the Agency will be in compliance with ISTA's Information Technology Security Plan.
FUTURE PLANS	The inventory will be reconciled to existing entries in the Ministry's asset tracking system. Future purchases and dispositions will be accurately tracked.

10.2. NATIONAL VITAL EVENTS DATA CAPTURE AND ROUTING SYSTEM

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency will continue to provide leadership on this project until its conclusion (estimated to be in 2004).
WHAT WE DID	The initial contract for the Conceptual Design has been completed and the results led to a second contract for the Impact Analysis.
WHAT THIS MEANS	National Routing will provide Statistics Canada with more timely and accurate data, and will provide for direct transmission of data from the providers to BC Vital Statistics.
FUTURE PLANS	The project is under review and future direction will be dependent on appropriate funding for the project.

10.3. EXPANSION OF ACCESS TO VISION

WHAT WE PLANNED	In 2000/2001, the Agency plans to expand the Government Agent (GA) web application to all GA offices with web access and to enhance the application to allow entry of AFS's and printing of certificates in the GA office.
WHAT WE DID	Technical enhancements made to VISION have strengthened our ability to provide this service. Agreement and access provisions have been completed to provide access to all GA offices.
WHAT THIS MEANS	All GA offices can do online inquiry on the status of an Application For Service. This enables the public to determine the status of a request at their local GA office.

FUTURE PLANS	In 2001/2002, the Agency plans to continue the work to allow entry of AFS's and printing of certificates in the GA offices.
WHAT WE PLANNED	In 2000/2001, the Agency plans to create another Web access to allow the Funeral Homes to enter Death Registrations and Death Certificate AFS's.
WHAT WE DID	Development has begun on building the screens and the necessary security.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Direct entry of Death Registrations will reduce offsite-keying costs, speed up death registration, and provide for more accurate editing of data.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to have a Funeral Home pilot site installed and running during fiscal 2001/2002.

10.4. DATA WAREHOUSE

WHAT WE PLANNED	In 2000/2001, the Agency is planning to complete the analysis and evaluation and begin building the Data Warehouse (VISTA).
WHAT WE DID	The analysis and evaluation have been completed and the development of VISTA is well under way.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Both accuracy and timeliness will be enhanced for all reports using statistical analysis of Vital Statistics data.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency plans to have the development and implementation of VISTA completed in 2001/2002.

10.5. RELEASE OF HISTORICAL VITAL EVENT RECORDS

WHAT WE PLANNED	In 2000/2001, the BC Archives web site will be modified to support a "shopping basket" for the sale of digital images of those Birth, Marriage, and Death registrations which have been released to the public.
WHAT WE DID	The modifications have been completed and the "shopping basket" is available for use.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The public can purchase a digital image of the actual registration using their credit card, and the image is immediately e- mailed to them as an attachment.

FUTURE PLANS	Revenue generated from these sales will be used to complete the digital imaging of records contained on the web site.

10.6. INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF DISEASES – VERSION 10 (ICD-10)

WHAT WE PLANNED	The statistical analysis in the Annual Report 2000 will be completely based on ICD-10 coding.
WHAT WE DID	ICD-9 codes that can be automatically converted to ICD-10 were converted in the Data Warehouse. A project is under way to manually code the medical data that cannot be automatically converted from existing data.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The Annual Report 2000 and all subsequent reports will be of the highest possible accuracy because of using the most current ICD-10 version for all data in the report.
FUTURE PLANS	As revisions to the International Classification of Diseases are released, work will continue to maintain all statistical data at the latest revision.

11. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

WHAT WE PLANNED	The Agency continues to exercise its option to internally manage communication issues that are specifically addressed and pre-approved in the Agency's business plans.
WHAT WE DID	The Agency has in-house technical staff members who are well versed in graphic design and pre-production layout work that follows the Agency's, the Ministry's and the BC Government's graphic design standards for conventional and Internet publication.
FUTURE PLANS	The Agency will continue to use the expertise of the Ministry's Communication Branch in a number of important areas. The Agency handles most day-to-day media requests for standard statistical information; however, the Ministry's Communication Branch will be consulted in all press releases and media-related or sensitive issues. The Branch is also consulted for valuable counsel in all new external communication initiatives.

12. HEALTH STATUS REGISTRY

12.1. MULTI-USER INTERFACE

WHAT WE PLANNED	Further efficiency in data maintenance will be achieved by converting the database to a true client server model using Oracle software.
WHAT WE DID	Due to resource shortages no action was taken on this project.
FUTURE PLANS	As resources become available the existing single user program will be ported to an Oracle based model and integrated with the VISTA data warehouse.

12.2. ICD-10 CODING

WHAT WE PLANNED	Prior to the year 2000, no reports have been generated that span the use of both ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes. Strategies that recognise subtleties between the code alignments in the two systems must be implemented when such analyses are undertaken.
WHAT WE DID	The Database program has been converted to accept ICD-10 codes, however most coding resources dealing with analyses spanning the ICD-9/10 data were expended on the VISION/VISTA data models.
WHAT THIS MEANS	Data from the Health Status Registry are still restricted to either ICD-9 or ICD-10.
FUTURE PLANS	Strategies that recognise subtleties between the code alignments in the two systems must be implemented to take full advantage of the ICD-10 conversion project.

12.3. NEW DATA SOURCES

WHAT WE PLANNED	The HSR plans to include the collection of congenital anomaly data from medically terminated pregnancies. Additionally the System has added source data regarding the incidence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).
WHAT WE DID	Senior Agency Researchers have been involved in two major projects involving Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and limb deformities. Workshops sponsored by the Agency have been held to help determine the direction and scope of research possible within the limitation of the available data.

WHAT THIS MEANS	The inclusion of medical data regarding birth anomalies in terminated pregnancies in the HSR will give researchers a clearer picture of their incidence. FAS has long been recognised as a drain on the health care resources of our society. Inclusion of more information regarding this condition will benefit researchers in determining the extent of the problem and its geographic dispersion.
FUTURE PLANS	The HSR will continue to pursue data sources and processes to facilitate the inclusion of all incidences of conditions relevant to the HSR.

12.4. DATA ANALYSES

WHAT WE PLANNED	A Feature Report has been prepared and will be released in the fall of 2000. It will include data inclusive to the end of 1998.
WHAT WE DID	The above-mentioned document was released. Additionally a brochure detailing the scope of the Health Status Registry and its potential uses was produced and released.
WHAT THIS MEANS	The release of information about the importance of maintaining this Registry and its potential use as a health care research tool has been well received.
FUTURE PLANS	The HSR plans to release Annual Reports and Feature Reports highlighting the incidence of specific birth conditions on a regular basis.

13. VITAL STATISTICS COUNCIL FOR CANADA

13.1. DESCRIPTION

All provincial and territorial government departments in Canada partner with Statistics Canada to minimise the reporting burden on Canadians of vital event data whose collection is mandated by both provincial and federal legislation. The Vital Statistics Council for Canada facilitates this partnership.

13.1.1. Key Business Functions

- organise an annual inter-jurisdictional forum to discuss issues around registration and certification of births, deaths, marriages, stillbirths and changes of names;
- facilitate sharing, exchange and retention of information, data and research between jurisdictions;
- discuss, with a view to achieving common approaches and uniformity where appropriate, the forms and certificates being used, the governing legislation, the procedures and format of the transfer and receipt of national and provincial/territorial data to/from Statistics Canada;
- liaise with all groups of service providers (e.g. physicians, coroners, funeral directors, law enforcement agencies, lawyers, notaries, etc.);
- liaise with other federal and provincial government departments, including the Passport Office, Family Allowance, and Social Services;
- support and achieve a synergy of a national data base; and
- liaise with US counterparts.

13.2. MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

WHAT WE PLANNED

The Director/CEO coordinates the development of the annual business plan of the Council and its long-term strategic plans. Agency staff will participate at various levels in the subcommittees of the Council.

WHAT WE DID

Agency staff were involved in the following activities;

- Committee on Electronic Birth and Death Registration;
- Participation of the Director of Vital Statistics;
- Data Standards and Quality Sub Committee;

- Certificate and Security Sub Committee;
- Legislation, Freedom of Information and Forms;
- Confidential Change of Name; and
- Adoption Information Committee.

WHAT THIS MEANS

By participating and supporting a national system of vital statistics the Agency minimizes the burden of data collection on the public at large while assuring the collection of the best quality of internationally compatible vital event data.

FUTURE PLANS

The Agency will continue to support the strategic initiatives of the Vital Statistics Council for Canada as defined in its Strategic Business Plan and its Technical Plans as defined in its Information and Systems Plan. Year to year activities outlined in its Annual Business Plan will be integrated into the activities of the Agency.

APPENDIX A: EXPENDITURE DETAIL 2000/01

STOB		BUDGET 2000/01	ACTUAL 2000/01	VARIANCE 2000/01
50	**SALARIES**	**3,926,000**	**3,965,943**	**(39,943)**
	BASE SALARIES	3,876,000	3,898,719	(22,719)
	OVERTIME	20,000	25,597	(5,597)
	LUMP SUM	30,000	41,627	(11,627)
51	**SUPPLEMENTARY SALARIES**	**50,000**	**40,851**	**9,149**
52	**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**	**677,000**	**718,631**	**(41,631)**
57	**TRAVEL**	**55,000**	**69,336**	**(14,336)**
60	**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**	**34,000**	**18,572**	**15,428**
	PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACTS	12,000	9,987	2,013
	ADVISORY CONTRACTS	22,000	8,585	13,415
63	**INFORMATION SYSTEMS**	**1,161,000**	**1,553,306**	**(392,306)**
	DATA ENTRY	145,000	118,864	26,136
	HISTORICAL DATA ENTRY	120,000	125,744	(5,744)
	DOCUMENT IMAGING	80,000	65,800	14,200
	INFORMATION SYSTEMS SUPPLIES	5,000	4,202	798
	NETWORK AND WORKSTATION SUPPORT	175,000	186,000	(11,000)
	INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONSULTING	140,000	273,452	(133,452)
	OTHER PROCESSING	241,000	140,046	100,954
	VOICE/FAX TELECOMMUNICATIONS	251,000	262,329	(11,329)
	NETWORK CHARGES	5,000	14,887	(9,887)
	MINOR HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE	30,000	7,112	22,888
	SOFTWARE LICENCES	150,000	95,062	54,938
	HARDWARE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT	60,000	67,841	(7,841)
	RECOVERABLE INFO SYSTEMS	0	332,013	(332,013)
65	**OFFICE AND BUSINESS EXPENSES**	**550,000**	**602,272**	**(52,272)**
	OFFICE EXPENSES - GENERAL	18,000	116,717	(98,717)
	WAREHOUSING	19,000	7,103	11,897
	PRINTED MATERIALS	149,000	47,289	101,711
	OFFICE STATIONARY AND SUPPLIES	20,000	27,212	(7,212)
	MINOR FURNITURE/PHOTOCOPIERS	26,500	31,812	(5,312)
	POSTAL SERVICES	210,000	233,683	(23,683)
	COURIER SERVICES	69,000	66,731	2,269
	TRAINING	35,000	51,110	(16,110)
	BUSINESS EXPENSES	3,500	20,615	(17,115)
68	**STATUTORY NOTICES**	**111,000**	**127,345**	**(16,345)**
	CHANGE OF NAME ADVERTISING	85,000	103,498	(18,498)
	ANNUAL REPORT	24,000	23,847	153
	OTHER	2,000	0	2,000

Expenditure Detail 2000/01 (cont'd)

STOB		BUDGET 2000/01	ACTUAL 2000/01	VARIANCE 2000/01
69	**UTILITIES/MATERIALS/SUPPLIES**	**30,000**	**21,178**	**8,822**
	MICROFILMING	27,000	20,672	6,328
	OTHER	3,000	506	2,494
70	**OPERATING EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES**	**23,000**	**8,217**	**14,783**
	NON-VEHICLE	11,000	2,766	8,234
	VEHICLE LEASE	5,000	1,379	3,621
	VEHICLE OPERATION	5,000	4,072	928
	VEHICLE OTHER	2,000	0	2,000
73	**AMORTIZATION EXPENSE**	**415,000**	**398,499**	**16,501**
	INFORMATION SYSTEMS	326,000	310,822	15,178
	OFFICE FURNITURE	75,000	77,327	(2,327)
	SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT	14,000	10,350	3,650
75	**BUILDING OCCUPANCY CHARGES**	**559,000**	**641,479**	**(82,479)**
	VICTORIA	374,000	395,681	(21,681)
	VANCOUVER	65,000	69,291	(4,291)
	KELOWNA	59,000	48,048	10,952
	PRINCE GEORGE	41,000	33,907	7,093
	RENTAL - WAREHOUSE	0	17,476	(17,476)
	LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS	20,000	77,076	(57,076)
76	**GRANTS**	**17,000**	**15,000**	**2,000**
	GRANTS TO UNIVERSITIES	17,000	15,000	2,000
78	**CONTRIBUTIONS**	**56,000**	**29,630**	**26,370**
	DISTRICT REGISTRAR ANCILLARY FEES	5,000	4,100	900
	SERVICE PROVIDERS	51,000	25,530	25,470
	INTEREST AND OTHER EXPENSES	**0**	**939**	**(939)**
	INTEREST CHARGES	0	143	(143)
	OTHER EXPENSES	0	796	(796)
	GROSS APPROPRIATED EXPENDITURES	**7,664,000**	**8,211,198**	**(547,198)**
88	**INTERNAL RECOVERIES**	**(277,000)**	**(342,324)**	**65,324**
	SOCIAL SERVICES MINISTRIES	(255,000)	(306,700)	51,700
	OTHER MINISTRIES	(22,000)	(35,624)	13,624
89	**RECOVERIES - EXTERNAL**	**(395,000)**	**(998,302)**	**603,302**
	FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	(132,000	(495,828)	363,828
	ADOPTIONS	(40,000)	(38,150)	(1,850)
	COMMEMORATIVES	(124,000)	(253,300)	129,300
	GENEALOGY	(82,000)	(135,850)	(53,850)
	RESEARCH	(11,000)	(69,955)	58,955
	OTHER	(6,000)	(5,219)	(781)
	NET APPROPRIATED EXPENDITURES	**6,922,000**	**6,870,572**	**121,428**

Expenditure Detail 2000/01 (cont'd)

STOB	BUDGET 2000/01	ACTUAL 2000/01	VARIANCE 2000/01
CAPITAL ACQUISITIONS			
MAINFRAME AND MINI HARDWARE	153,000	152,145	855
PC AND PERIPHERAL HARDWARE	38,000	36,585	1,415
MAINFRAME AND MINI SOFTWARE	400,000	376,811	23,189
PC SOFTWARE	7,000	10,599	(3,599)
OPERATING EQUIPMENT	17,000	17,321	(321)
OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	40,000	37,027	2,973
VEHICLES	10,000	0	10,000
TOTAL CAPITAL ACQUISITIONS	**665,000**	**630,488**	**34,512**
SALARIES AND BENEFITS	4,653,000	4,725,425	(72,425)
OPERATING COSTS	2,915,000	3,431,987	(516,987)
GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS	73,000	44,630	28,370
RECOVERIES	(672,000)	(1,340,626)	668,626
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	**6,969,000**	**6,861,416**	**107,584**
ASSET ACQUISITIONS	665,000	630,488	34,512

APPENDIX B: BRITISH COLUMBIA VITAL STATISTICS AGENCY FISCAL 2000/01 BUSINESS PLAN TO RESTATED ESTIMATES RECONCILIATION

		Business Plan Fiscal 00/01 Budget	Additions		Reductions		Restated Estimates Fiscal 00/01 Budget
50	Base Salaries	3,926,075			75	A	3,926,000
51	Supplementary Salaries	50,000					50,000
52	Employee Benefits	824,476	524	A	148,000	B	677,000
57	Travel	55,000					55,000
60	Professional and Advisory Services	33,500	500	A			34,000
63	Information Systems	1,026,000			43,000	C	983,000
65	Office and Business Expenses	550,300			300	A	550,000
	Office Furniture	20,000			20,000	D	-
68	Statutory Notices	111,000					111,000
69	Utilities/Materials/Supplies	53,100			100	A	53,000
73	Amortization Expense	523,812	71,188	D			595,000
75	Building Occupancy Charges	558,500	500	A			559,000
76	Grants	17,500			500	A	17,000
78	Contributions	55,600	400	A			56,000
88	Internal - Recoveries	(277,000)					(277,000)
89	Recoveries - External	(395,342)			(342)	A	(395,000)
Total		**7,132,521**	**73,112**		**211,633**		**6,994,000**
FTE		97					97

	ASSET ACQUISITIONS						
	Special Equipment Acquisitions	25,000					25,000
	Furn & Equip Acquisitions	-	20,000	D			20,000
	Vehicle Acquisitions	-	30,000	E			30,000
	Information Systems Acquisitions	415,000	205,000	F	30,000	E	590,000
	TOTAL ASSET ACQUISITIONS	**440,000**	**255,000**		**30,000**		**665,000**

OPERATING SUMMARY					
Salaries and Benefits	4,800,551	524		148,075	4,653,000
Operating Costs	2,931,212	72,188		63,400	2,940,000
Grants and Contributions	73,100	400		500	73,000
Recoveries	(672,342)	-		(342)	(672,000)
	7,132,521	73,112		211,633	6,994,000

A - Adjustments required to round major classifications to the nearest $1,000.

B - Fiscal 2000/01 base budget reduction in employee benefit charges to reflect a pension charge reduction of $148,000.

C - A base budget reduction of $43,000 to the Information Systems budget to reflect a price reduction in telephone charges (cross government).

D - A reduction in the operating expenditure budget of $20,000 and an increase in the capital acquisition budget of $20,000 to reflect the reclassification of Office Furniture and Equipment as Capital rather than an operating expenditures. The Amortization Expense budget was increased by $71,000 to provide funding for prior years expenditures capitalized and 188 to round to the nearest $1,000.

E - To transfer $30,000 in Capital Funding from Information Systems to vehicles to enable the Agency to purchase a new vehicle if necessary.

F - To increase the Information Systems budget by $5,000 added during the budget development process, and by $200,000 from Provincial Capital Contingency Funds to provide funding for an increase in scope to the Vital Statistics data warehouse project.

APPENDIX C: STATUS REPORT ON FLEXIBILITY POLICIES

As part of establishing Vital Statistics as a Special Operating Agency, Treasury Board granted a number of policy flexibilities to the new Special Operating Agency. The original flexibility policies are located in the Agency Framework Agreement signed March 14, 1996. As a result of excellent performance in the first three years as a SOA, Treasury Board agreed to the negotiation of additional flexibilities during the period of the 1999-2004 Business Plan.

C.1 APPROPRIATION CONTROLS

C.1.1 Expenditure Carryovers

The Agency has realised operating budget surpluses in each year since its establishment as a SOA in fiscal 1996/97. The accumulated operating surplus including the fiscal 2000/2001 surplus of $121,428 is $1,132,492. With the addition of the capital surplus of $34,512 in fiscal 2000/2001 the total surpluses generated by the Agency to date are $1,167,004. In fiscal 1999/2000, $200,000 in carry over funds were included in the pre-budget target established by Treasury Board. As the budget submitted by the Agency was well below the target the carry over was not required. As the Agency has continued to reduce its budget while at the same time generating surpluses, future cost pressures, especially as they relate to capital replacement may result in the need to access this flexibility. For the near future the Agency is confident that carry over funds can be negotiated with Treasury Board on an as and when required basis.

C.1.2 Multi-year Budgeting

Informally, the Agency and Treasury Board staff have effectively invoked this flexibility through the establishment of the spending plans in the business plan. It has been agreed that spending undertaken to meet business plan objectives, within context of the total annual appropriation, is an acceptable implementation of this flexibility given present legislative constraints. Due to the recent implementation of capital budgeting policies by government, the need to establish mechanisms to ensure flexibility in the timing of capital acquisitions are required to ensure effective and efficient management of capital acquisitions over multiple fiscal years. Government adoption of multi-year service plans and targets may result in this flexibility being redundant as government adopts a multi-year budgeting process.

C.1.3 Spending of Recoveries Above Estimates

Although the Agency realised significant recoveries above estimates in each of the last five fiscal years it has to date been unable to fully access this flexibility. This has been due partially to the Agency's desire to operate within the "spirit" of government restraint initiatives and the absence of a process to access surpluses from prior years. (The extent of recoveries above estimates may not be recognised until close to the end of the fiscal year when little or no time is available to initiate projects utilising these funds). Establishment of a mechanism to access prior year's expenditure carryovers will facilitate full access to this flexibility.

C.1.4 Exemption from Expenditure Restraint Exercises

With the establishment of the Agency as an independent financial accounting entity and placement of out of province travel plans in its annual Business Plan the Agency has fully implemented this flexibility. The Agency recognises the need for restraint and as a result continues to operate in the spirit of restraint during periods of cross government restraint exercises.

C.2 ACCOMMODATION

C.2.1 Authority to Implement Accommodation and Major Project Plans Approved in the Business Plan

The Agency has the authority to implement accommodation and Major Project plans approved in the Business Plan. This flexibility was implemented in fiscal 1996/97 in order to reduce space requirements in the Vancouver Regional office in compliance with the 1996/97 Business Plan. These plans were fully implemented in fiscal 1997/98. There has been no requirement to undertake major accommodation projects since.

C.2.2 Authority to Contract With B.C.B.C. or a Private Company

The Agency has the authority to contract with B.C.B.C. or a private company. As partners, B.C.B.C. representatives and the Agency continue to analyse lease options, overhead and maintenance agreements to determine if cost savings can be identified.

Experience to date indicates that B.C.B.C. continues to be committed to working directly with and maintaining a good working relationship with the Agency.

C.3 ADVERTISING AND PUBLICATIONS

C.3.1 Communications Plan

With the support of Treasury Board the Agency may negotiate agreements and obtain pre-approval of a communications plan and budget from the Government Communications Office. This flexibility has been fully implemented as it applies to Vital Statistics operations under complete control of the Agency.

C.3.2 Control of Communications Activities

The Agency is authorised to have direct control of communications activities, commitments and expenditures as outlined in the annual communications plan. This flexibility has been fully implemented.

C.4 AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS

The Agency has fully implemented its authority in negotiating and signing all intra and inter governmental agreements to which the Agency is party. Data access and recovery agreements have been struck with numerous provincial and federal ministries as well as vital statistics

organisations in other provinces. The Agency is currently pursuing the possibility of providing vital statistics systems services for other Canadian provinces.

C.5 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

The Agency had implemented full authority over capital expenditures less than $250,000 prior to the implementation of the government's new accounting and budgeting policies for capital. At present, Treasury Boards capital budgeting policies conflict with the continued use of this flexibility. The Agency has identified the need to work with Treasury Board Staff to establish a method of re-implementing this flexibility within the context of the new capital policies. This issue will be raised during fiscal 2001/02. With the exception of systems development, specifically on the data warehouse project, no capital expenditures exceeding $250,000 were included in the Business Plan or undertaken in fiscal 2000/2001.

C.6 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

C.6.1 Systems Expenditures

The flexibility authorises the Agency to spend up to $1 million and up to 10% above amounts identified in the Business Plan as planned expenditures. The authority of the Agency to take advantage of this flexibility is now fully recognised by the Ministry. This flexibility has been fully implemented.

C.6.2 Development of Cost Effective Systems Solutions

As a result of the Agency's ability to develop its own systems solutions the Agency has been able to attain and exceed its spending reduction targets over the past four fiscal years. The Agency continues to work with ITSD and other ministries to develop innovative solutions applicable to other organisations as part of its systems development projects.

C.7 MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, LAND, BUILDINGS AND WORKS

The Agency is authorised to purchase or lease machinery and equipment up to a cost of $1 million if any item over $250,000 is included in the Business Plan. There has been no requirement to exercise this flexibility to date.

C.8 SERVICE CONTRACTS/CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The Agency has the authority to enter into service contracts up to $250,000, provided contracts are tendered using government policy. All contracts entered into by the Agency in 2000/2001 were less than $250,000. The Agency tenders and manages its own contracts and receives assistance from the Purchasing Commission at the Agency's request.

C.9 STAFFING LIMITS

The Agency is permitted access to the Government's Corporate FTE complement for additional FTE requirements that are related to unanticipated volume demands. The Agency has not been required to use this access as it has been under its FTE budget in all fiscal years since this flexibility was granted.

C.10 VEHICLE MANAGEMENT

The Agency is authorized to enter into its own vehicle management and leasing program. The Agency continued to manage its own vehicles throughout 2000/2001 although leases were contracted through the Ministry. The Agency would derive no benefit by opting out of Government fleet lease.

C.11 PAYMENTS BASED ON CONTRIBUTIONS

The Agency has authority to approve grants to a maximum of $250,000 on a per item basis, and up to $1 million if detailed in the Business Plan. There were no grants in excess of $250,000 in 2000/2001.

C.12 PURCHASE OF MATERIAL

The Agency has the authority to negotiate with the Purchasing Commission or to purchase through independent suppliers. The Agency has worked with the Purchasing Commission on purchases of major items and only exercised independent authority for minor items where it has been established that it is cost effective to do so.

C.13 SALES OF SURPLUS ASSETS

The Agency has the ability to contract asset disposal with either the Purchasing Commission or with the private sector with revenue to be directly returned to the Agency. Based on a limited amount of equipment identified as surplus and due to Ministry needs, the Agency has continued to ship surplus equipment to the Ministry for redistribution.

C.14 MICROGRAPHIC SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT

The Agency has authority to purchase micrographic services and equipment up to $500,000 but the Agency's purchase of micrographic services and equipment did not exceed $18,000 for the 2000/2001 fiscal year.

C.15 BC MAIL PLUS

The Agency is authorized to purchase or contract for postal equipment or services to meet its specific requirements, or may continue to contract with BC Mail Plus. In fiscal 2000/2001 the Agency continued to contract a number of hospital auxiliaries to stuff birth information packages and ensure current stock were maintained on hospital maternity wards. Stuffing and distribution to hospitals was previously contracted with BC Mail Plus. Cost has been reduced by approximately $8,000 annually and contracting with hospital auxiliaries has proven to be more effective as materials are readily available on maternity wards when and where they are required.

C.16 PHOTOCOPYING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

The authority for approval for the purchase of photocopying equipment and related service contracts has been delegated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Agency. In fiscal 2000/2001 the Agency has exercised its authority only to replace obsolete equipment as the Ministry continues to supply cost effective Quick Print Services.

C.16.1 Government Records and Recorded Information Management

The Agency has full authority over records and recorded information management within the scope of the *Financial Administration Act* and associated government policy. As implementation of this flexibility is not considered a high priority, the Agency has continued to use Ministry records management services.

C.17 TRAVEL

C.17.1 Accommodation Policies

The Agency is authorized to exceed overnight accommodation rates where it is cost justifiable. Establishment of the Agency as its own financial accounting entity has enabled the Agency to fully implement this flexibility, though only minimal utilisation was required in fiscal 2000/2001.

C.17.2 Out of Province Travel

The Agency is approved to authorize travel within Canada (outside British Columbia) and the United States for established business purposes. This flexibility has been fully implemented though annual out of province travel plans are submitted to Treasury Board Staff at the beginning of the fiscal year for confirmation.

C.17.3 Payment of Travel Claims

The Agency has the authority to implement alternative processes for the processing and payment of travel claims (e.g. SFO Bank Account). Due to the implementation of the CAS system, the use of American Express Corporate Cards for travel and the establishment of the Agency as its own financial accounting entity, there is no longer a requirement for alternative processes.

C.17.4 Contracted Travel Services

The Agency is authorized to make its own travel arrangements or make use of the Ministry contracted travel agency. The Agency has continued to make use of the Ministry travel Agency though maintains its own business travel account. The Agency will be monitoring changes in the travel industry during fiscal 2001/02 to determine the most cost-effective means of meeting its needs.

C.18 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

C.18.1 Staffing and Classification Issues

The CEO may review staffing and classification issues directly with PSERC where essential to meet the business success of the Agency. To date there has been no requirement to make use of this flexibility provision.

C.18.2 Employee Incentives and Rewards

The Agency may provide work-related incentives and rewards over and above those normally available. The Agency established a small fund in its fiscal 1998/99 budget to provide token

(non-financial) awards to employees. The Agency has fully implemented the provincial governments Staff Appreciation Awards Policy in order to recognise outstanding employee performance. Due to the success of the Agency in obtaining recognition and awards for its employees through the Employee Recognition Program, and through the Public Service Awards Program, additional awards over and above those normally available have not been deemed necessary in the past two fiscal years.

C.18.3 FTE Freeze Exemption

The Agency is authorized to operate within its approved Business Plan and will be exempt from Treasury Board FTE freezes. This flexibility has been implemented within the context of Government/Ministry employee placement programs. Although the Agency has not been required to obtain additional FTEs under this flexibility the Agency has been able to fill vacant positions. There has been a negative impact resulting from employee placement programs as employees are placed on the basis of seniority; placements are frequently unqualified for the positions in which they are placed resulting in extensive training being required with a high turnover of some placements.